

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

JANUARY, 1933

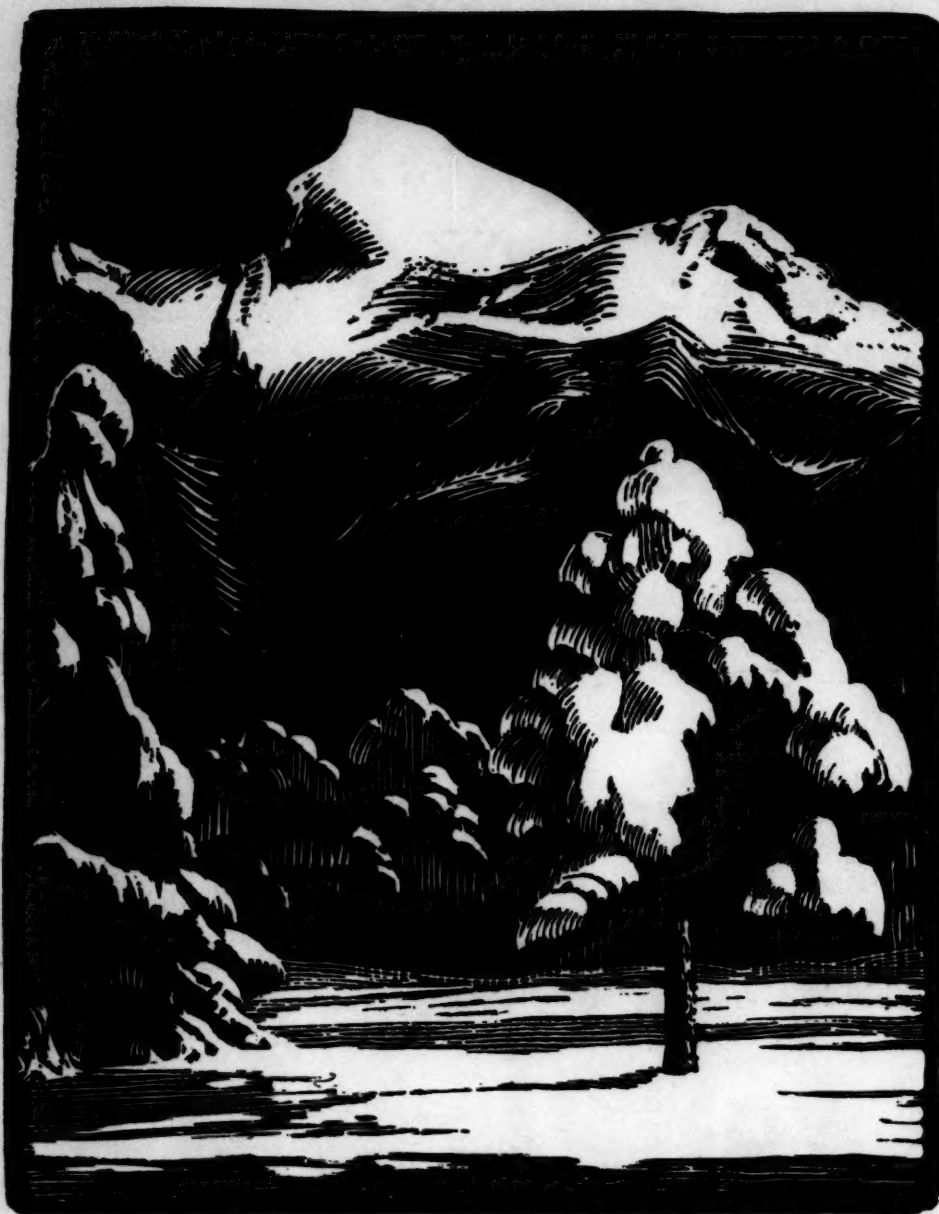
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CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Curriculum Planning for a Changing Society

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IF IT were not for the suffering that would be brought to untold millions, it would be a great boon to education if the depression were to continue a little longer. Until the last three years little fundamental thinking regarding the place of education in social and economic reconstruction had been done except by the one in a million. During the last few months, however, those in the schools and the colleges are beginning to suspect that, as good as the schools are, they have not measured up to their full obligations in respect to assisting pupils in securing a practicable, working understanding of some of the problems with which the world is now vexed. It has taken a depression such as this to shake the smugness of most of us in education, and it may take more to force us to such a realization of the full responsibilities of the schools that we will become active participants in an honest attempt to make the school serve its optimum function to the individual and to the state.

The numerous and sweeping changes in our economic life during the last quarter of a century, capped by the depression of the last three years, is undoubtedly no small part of the cause for the present tremen-

dous activity in curriculum making and the perceptible beginning of fundamental changes in the content of courses of study. The work, however, is barely begun. No course of study tells the story of the complete revolution in the modes of living of millions of people brought about by labor-saving machines. With engineers freely predicting that the work of the world can be done in three and four day weeks and six hour days, the problems of leisure time assume a tremendous new importance. With certain types of crime on the increase, with every fifth marriage ending in divorce, curriculum makers are beginning to realize that they have accomplished little in treating of problems that are extremely crucial to the welfare of humanity. The sight of military nations bankrupt but armed to the teeth and the daily reading of political revolutions in South America and elsewhere brought about by social unrest is beginning to make us wonder whether or not our curricula should contain some materials and activities that might lead the coming generation to a better understanding of some of the problems concerned with world peace. With literally millions of men unemployed and thousands of factories ly-

ing idle in spite of the fact that there is an abundance of raw materials available and millions of people needing the products of the factories, even the average school man begins to realize that something is wrong with the social and economic order.

If the depression should continue and there should be further drastic reductions in teachers' salaries and wholesale elimination of great blocks of the curriculum especially in the fields of art, music, social studies, and wholesome recreational activities, there is little question but that all of us in education would realize the gravity of the situation; but when will we come to a full appreciation of the fact that although our law-making bodies may pass remedial measures which may be of temporary assistance the only possibility of anything like a permanent solution for many of our present troubles lies in a changed curriculum? When will we substitute for gerundives and objective compliments an honest consideration of the problems which cause millions to be jobless, thousands to be hungry, and hundreds of thousands to be unhappy in facing uncertain futures? When will we permit a study of the problems involved in idle factories, depressed agriculture, the family and the interdependence of nations and peoples at least along with, if not in lieu of, the monotonous and useless minutiae of formal materials with which our curricula are cluttered? Must we see the work of the schools more seriously hampered and must we ourselves be without positions or have our incomes cut in half before we realize the importance of these things?

There are at least three answers to the "when" questions just asked. We shall begin a serious consideration of these problems in our schools, first, when we ourselves fully appreciate the gravity of the situation and the important part education can play in the whole problem; second, when we as teachers take sufficient time from the study of our narrow specialized fields to know something about these problems ourselves; and third, when the public, either through our guidance or otherwise, will permit us to

help them through the schools to attempt the things this country so sorely needs.

Circumstances and conditions are forcing the realization upon us that something ought to be done, but the mass of us have little idea of what can be done. We fail to comprehend the important rôle education has to play in this world drama. We continue to read and to take the regular courses in summer schools (and unfortunately few other courses are offered by our teacher training institutions) so we can do better the formal tasks to which we have been assigned. Not until we substitute for or parallel such activities with those that will lead to a deeper and more thorough personal knowledge and understanding of some of the most pivotal world problems can we hope to carry this work successfully into the schools.

Such a plan would call for a study of social and economic problems not only in books, magazines, and newspapers, but through direct contacts in our own situations. Practically every community teems with material—interesting, available, appropriate, valuable material. Acres of diamonds are around us while within the four walls of our rooms we are studying forms, useful to few and uninteresting to many. Our machine and industrial age with its accompanying economic, social, and personal problems offers opportunities for education which have never been paralleled. It also presents a host of obligations. When history is written a hundred years from now, there is little question but that the present period will rank in importance and in radicalness of change far beyond the period of the Renaissance. If we are to give virility to our culture, it must be deeply rooted in this rich civilization of our own time.

Your own community, in many cases, will make an excellent laboratory in which you can capitalize upon the opportunities afforded by the present age. It is not at all necessary that these opportunities be incorporated in abstract or general terms. Housing conditions, food and clothing supplies, communication and transportation

facilities, community organizations as exemplified by churches, clubs, chambers of commerce, and the like, are replete with materials and suggestions bearing upon some of the interesting and all important problems of human relations, distribution of wealth, marketing, interdependence, and recreation, to mention only a few. Many schools now use their communities as sources of curriculum materials, but in the main this is done very superficially. In a study of transportation in the intermediate and junior high school grades, for instance, we will find excellent descriptions of different transportation systems, an accurate study of the history of transportation, pictures and constructive work illustrating the various stages, and often interesting literature concerned with travel. All of this is good as far as it goes. What we fail to do, however, is to utilize our opportunities to paint a fair and impartial picture of transportation with its social and economic implications. Our unit usually ends with, "They all lived happily ever after." We fail to show the stress and struggle that is involved; the manipulation and the competition that exists. We neglect to bring out such facts as the number of people in the community engaged in transportation in some form or other, the number working as clerks, telegraph operators, maintenance-of-way men, dispatchers, bus drivers, brakemen, publicity agents, and the like; the number of unemployed in each division and some of the reasons for their unemployment; the number of passenger trains that have been taken off in the past few years, the comparatively lower freight rates by truck in contrast to those by rail; the government subsidy through mail of the infant industry air service, the increasing number of passengers as well as the growing quantities of mail and express carried by planes, the politics involved in securing and holding franchises; the effect on the corner grocery store when the men in transportation are unemployed, the inadequacy of railroads to meet present conditions and the relative function of local, state, and federal control of transportation systems. In the

main we in the schools have skimmed blissfully and academically over the surface and have left to others the discussion of problems that really matter.

I would not be so foolish as to argue that the abstract and intricate theories and laws involved in many of these social and economic problems should be presented to children, but I am proposing that literally hundreds of the important elements necessary to an understanding of the more fundamental theories and laws could be understood by pupils on the various age and grade levels if we had the proper curriculum materials in the hands of teachers who were interested in and understood these problems themselves. While obviously some of the intricate phases of, for example, the interdependence of nations, could not be understood by pupils in the elementary schools, certain ideas regarding interdependence can be understood by even first and second grade children especially when supported by familiar illustrations such as the mutual dependence of the farmer and the grocer, the physician and the family, and the child and the mother.

Another illustration may assist in making clear the fact that it is feasible to introduce certain elements of crucial and sometimes rather intricate problems on lower levels than we have heretofore thought possible. A second grade group from the Lincoln School visited one of the substation post offices in New York City. Outside the post office was a line of men seeking employment. As the children entered they saw them turned away from the window one by one. Their genuine sorrow for these men *seemed* to be forgotten, however, after the children were admitted to the mysteries behind the long rows of boxes especially when the postmaster in charge began to show them many interesting things which they had never seen. They were allowed, under guidance, to operate the stamping machine. The postmaster began to tell them how a few years ago it had taken seven men to do the work that was now accomplished so expeditiously by this one machine. A few minutes later he showed them

the mail shoots through which the mail was propelled by air pressure from a central station down town. Again he told them of the number of men that were discharged from trucking and loading services when the shoots were installed. Not one but many questions ending with the plaintive plea of little John, "Isn't there anything left for the poor men outside to do?" indicated that even these second grade youngsters had grasped certain elementary phases of the problem of technological unemployment.

More difficult elements of universally important problems can be introduced in later grades, in the high schools, and in the colleges. Excellent illustrations of promising beginnings in this direction for elementary grades can be found in the social studies courses of study of South Dakota, Houston, Texas, and Allegany and Montgomery Counties, Maryland.

The new program does not envisage the exclusion of reading, writing, and arithmetic; but it asks the question, "Why not read, write, and figure about things that matter?" How much more interesting and virile reading, writing, and figuring are when they are concerned with incidents pupils have experienced, topics of current conversation, and things that are actually happening around them. Under such a plan pupils in elementary grades will become familiar with not only such common words as train, travel, and mile; but they will learn to write and use correctly a much wider range of words and expressions, such as rate, competitive, employment, standards of living, interdependence, and government control. Vital and natural settings in which words and ideas are placed tend to make them a part of real living and hence perpetuates them as part of the needed equipment of each pupil. Drill, of course, is sometimes necessary in this program. When the pupil and teacher find that the pupil is unable to express himself adequately because of faulty spelling or sentence structure, the necessity for drill on these often becomes obvious to the pupil himself. The pupil knows that he needs to

master certain forms in order to say or write something that he wants to say or write. The psychological setting is appropriate. The important point is that all the time the pupil is learning to read, to write, and to spell—in a word, to express himself—he is having experiences and utilizing materials that will make him a more integral, valuable, and happy member of the society to which he belongs.

Even if teachers realized the part education can play in social and economic reconstruction and had the knowledge and techniques for developing curricula which would lend themselves to this purpose, their work would be greatly retarded unless a changed point of view on the part of a large portion of the public could be affected. At the present time tax payers' leagues are growing in numbers and influence due to the conditions in which the country finds itself. In their zeal to accomplish what seems to be a perfectly justifiable end, namely, the lowering of taxes, they seem to overlook almost completely the fundamental underlying causes of present conditions and to be seeking merely immediate relief. Their cry is, "Cut expenditures, down with fads and frills, back to the fundamentals." It is a slogan which has wide popular appeal. How many of these citizens stop to ask themselves or others, "What are fads and frills? What are the fundamentals?" How many attempt to analyze the causes behind present world conditions and to ask what the schools have had to do with causing or remedying such conditions? How many who condemn creative arts, wholesome recreational life, and the study of home making as fads and frills realize that many of the things for which they are pleading as fundamentals are, as a matter of fact the real fads and frills if happy and effective social living is the goal of education. Subscribing in many instances to a faulty psychology based on a misconception of the idea of discipline, they are exploiting the powerful and deserving slogan of economy to perpetuate for themselves and their children a social and economic order of the most expensive type—expensive in dollars

and cents, in human happiness, in general social welfare.

To blame present conditions upon the public schools would be to show oneself unintelligent but to refuse to see the tremendous opportunities and obligations of the schools in connection with rearing a new generation that will have a far better understanding of the intricate problems that lie behind such conditions would be to show oneself even less intelligent. A monotonous drilling on lifeless subject matter material having only remote, if any, connection with the social, economic, and personal problems of the present civilization will not bring about the desired change. The taxpayer who clamors for and forces school officials to continue or to return to the curriculum content of 1870 is fastening upon himself and his children still more serious troubles and is defeating his own goals. It is as much the business of every individual engaged in education today to assist the public in getting a wholesome and accurate view of the whole situation as it is to reconstruct curricula along sane lines; in fact, it is of necessity a prior obligation for without the support of the public the schools will fall short of their objectives.

What are a few of the outstanding things that must be done by the curriculum maker if the schools are to improve personal living and help reconstruct the social and economic order? Our next task will be to capitalize in an optimum way upon the excellent start that has been made in the last two or three years. This will embody:

(1) A careful analysis of world civilization with a view to determining those issues and problems which are most crucial for the happy and effective living of individuals in our various social groups. Here the curriculum maker must go to the economist, the sociologist, the politician, the artist, the musician, the engineer, and the poet. This should be the business of specialists and "frontier thinkers" in various fields.

(2) A study of the understandings needed in order to comprehend the meaning of the various aspects of these issues and problems. Care should be taken here that the

different points of view regarding each issue be clearly, accurately, and impartially presented. Experience shows us that in many cases it will be necessary for the language of the specialists in the different fields to be "translated" if the average teacher and layman is to grasp fully the meanings involved. Even writers in the fields of sociology and economics have their formalisms and clumsy English. Pigou cannot be read with interest and intelligence by everyone.

(3) The discovery through experimentation and discussion of those understandings which are appropriate for the various age and grade levels. This will be the business of teachers and specialists.

(4) The construction of courses of study which contain a wealth of interesting and valuable suggestions to teachers regarding materials and experiences related to the big truths of life. This will be the task of the course of study writer. His aim in constructing these courses should be to assist the teachers to aid pupils in understanding, on the proper age and grade level, some of the crucial problems of modern living by leading them through interesting and appropriate experiences involving accurate pertinent materials of many kinds. Teachers utilizing these courses must realize that passive, formal, academic understandings are not the goals for which they are striving. Pupils must engage in the kinds of activities that will enable them to realize that crucial problems exist, that civilization is changing, and that they must be able to cope with change as it presents itself. They must have numerous opportunities for making valuable judgments.

(5) The preparation of pupil materials which contain ideas and language appropriate for the various grades and ages. Grave errors can be made in attempting to instill understandings too far advanced for pupils of any given age or grade. The errors in the past, however, have probably been made in the direction of underestimating the wholehearted interest and the amount and depth of understanding children can acquire regarding many of these issues.

(6) Careful experimentation with the

activities and materials for teachers and pupils in order to determine what changes, if any, need to be made in order that pupils may be led, on the proper age and grade level, to an optimum understanding of the problems involved. This will demand the setting up of tests for purposes of checking the effectiveness of the activities and materials employed. It pre-supposes that we should attempt to construct not only objective tests that may measure progress in informations and skills but to develop means by which we can gauge more accurately growth in pupil attitudes, ideals, and understandings.

(7) The continuous refinement of the activities and materials of the courses of study to the end that all of those issues which are most crucial for personal happiness and improved social and economic controls may be interestingly and effectively considered by pupils and adults at the appropriate times.

These are some of the things that will and should be envisaged in our curriculum work of the future. It is a program which demands that we go forward looking forward and relinquish our attempts to go forward looking backward. It requires that we look fearlessly and scientifically into the problems that individuals and society are now facing and probably will face and construct our courses of study so as to assist pupils in meeting more effectively the new demands. It is a program which will require the gradual elimination of from thirty to fifty per cent of the materials now used in the average American school and the substituting therefor of materials and activities which bear directly and immediately upon the solution of problems with which we are faced today rather than those which were faced by our ancestors. It is a program which will force our teachers and course of study makers to a breadth of reading, travel, and experience which has never before been thought advisable or possible. We cannot expect success for a program of this type until first of all those who have the training of our pupils in charge have a

far wider range of information and experience than comes to the average teacher who confines ninety-five percent of her working time to the classroom and to courses in formal education.

Carlyle wrote that the best educated man is the one who has touched life in the most places. The actual contacts with life now permitted our pupils with the present courses of study in spite of the improvements of the last two years are extremely meager when compared with existing opportunities. The new curriculum must, for national and world as well as individual reasons, take upon itself the obligation of capitalizing upon the culture which the present civilization presents in such a wealth of ways. To make such a course of study is fraught with difficulties—difficulties which demand that the curriculum maker face traditions of years standing, deep seated bias and prejudices, vested subject matter and commercial interests, and his own undeveloped techniques for collecting and utilizing proper experiences and materials.

To the school leaders in the field the introduction of such a program calls for courageous, ingenious, and well-balanced thinking. Common sense would dictate that in most instances it would not be wise to attempt to install immediately, especially in the secondary schools, a course consisting completely of problems. On the other hand, tremendous forward strides can be made in almost any community by informed and capable school leaders in incorporating a consideration of many phases of these world problems in present subject matter set-ups as well as through the introduction of certain larger and more inclusive fields such as the social studies. The great need is for vision and materials. The construction and installation of these kinds of curricula calls for a new education on the part of all of us; but the call is so urgent and challenging and the possibilities for improvement of our profession, of humanity, and of self are so great that we dare not pass it by unheeded.

The New School from the Point of View of the Psychiatrist

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PROGRESS in the study of human behavior has made professional isolation impossible. The teacher can no longer feel secure in the belief that she thoroughly understands her pupils, except if she recognizes the vital contributions made by the school physician, specialists among educational supervisors and the approach made through social work in the visiting teacher field, to name a few. Allied professions, advancing rapidly in their deeper studies of human material, are largely dependent on each other and have come to recognize and respect each other's influence on their work. The teacher who can best sense and understand what extra-pedagogic minds can offer, at the same time that she maintains, as basic to her success, the teacher's attitude and method, ought to enjoy the largest measure of success and satisfaction in her work.

Psychiatry, old in the problems of the abnormal and comparatively new in the much more important problems of ordinary humans, has become a professional ally of the teacher, and the psychiatrist finds himself in a significant position as a critical spectator, to say the least, of the interesting daily dramas in classroom life. Scrutinizing closely he becomes more fascinated by the individual than by the total program, so that he is early a proponent of progressive education, though he finds it harder, like others, to offer a "perfect plan" than to find fault with systems which are group-enslaved and less flexible than he wishes they were. The psychiatrist attempts not only to study the mechanisms of human behavior, but to modify it where it has deviated from the more usual and the more comfortable paths of expression.

"The psychiatric point of view" is now a

commoner professional term than "from the psychological standpoint." It stands solidly on three major premises: First of all, complex human behavior emerges from the interplay of four major interdependent components: the body, the intellect, the emotions, and the environment. The quality of their integration is far more important than their individual functions and they cannot be clearly separated from each other, as "the mind and the body and all that surrounds them are one." Secondly, what the individual produces and achieves may be very important to society, but it is less valuable to him than how he feels about it. A well-balanced person is happier than one whose overdetermined efforts take their toll from his emotional health and cost him a measure of emotional stability. Lastly, psychiatry has greatly emphasized the tremendous value of objectivity, which produces an intellectual and therefore more stable viewpoint on one's own and others' behavior. This, self-effacing on a ground-work of understanding, is the cardinal sign of the mature thinker. These major aspects of the psychiatrist's approach hold whatever "the school" (organic, psychoanalytic, etc.) he follows. The teacher can, and presumably should, incorporate thinking of this sort.

It seems logical to believe that child-parent relationships in the pre-school years form the basis for a life time of social adaptability, that difficulties in this family drama commonly cripple the child's social development. A child who can get along as well without his parents as with them (and he can not do either alone, actually) is really prepared for the academic and social influences of school life. Leaving a situation in which his ego must be wholesomely de-

flated is not always a pleasurable process for a child. Though it may be true that the overprotected child of an overanxious mother, with whom he is mutually fixated, needs this social weaning more than anything else, the teacher must proceed cautiously. She has little to puzzle her in the management of children whose parents have used the right measure of "wholesome neglect," because they have already been allowed to enjoy adequate independent social experience. The shy child is more difficult and is better brought out by gentle stimulation, exercised patiently and pleasantly, than by either total neglect or harsh pressure. The teacher, unconsciously the first major parent substitute in a child's life, dare not too sharply depart from the parent-pattern laid down at home. Too often that parent image needs to be greatly changed, but the teacher cannot suddenly and boldly effect it. She has the added burden, of course, of delicately guiding the child's life among his classmates. He is unconsciously apt to react to them as he has towards his brothers and sisters, or to more sharply resent their importance if he is an only child. The teacher who can make social growth pleasurable for the child, so that he comes to enjoy comparative unimportance in a cooperative class unit, has greatly diluted early primitive urges for the domination which infantile helplessness naturally brings. This drive for control over-stresses the competitive, which is a far less desirable trait than the cooperative spirit.

If reasoning of this sort is correct, the teacher's position as a parent substitute is far more important than her job in more or less formal education. She teaches life, not just studies, and she prepares the child for the group drives which normally replace intra-familial satisfactions at about nine years. Obviously, she has a harder job where the parent refuses to be displaced or weaned from the child (more often first recognized as a symptom in the child, home-sickness), but she is wise in being objective about this, in avoiding escape from this more difficult emotional position by "blaming" the parent.

What a psychiatrist may emphasize, in terms of a better school program, may readily seem obvious to the flexible mind of a liberal educator. Even a progressive teacher, though, often feels deeply frustrated in having to recognize that so many of her colleagues are rigidly defensive against any sort of change. Some block progress like their grandparents blocked the elevator. The school room is more orderly underneath where the pupils are allowed comparatively free expression, even though it usually produces minor misbehavior and destroys the illusion that only "well-behaved children" are socially desirable. This does not, on the other hand, imply that children should be given the license to do as they please, which is impossible anyway, but the teacher can guide their behavior into socially accepted channels through a minimal use of repression. If the total personality pattern of the child is respected and considered most important, then specific personality facets like grades, good or bad manners and social reactions of various types, will be recognized, in themselves, as simply part of the total picture.

The parent or teacher who measures a child primarily by his academic standing or his external behavior is in danger of serious diagnostic error. A fifteen year old girl, for example, represented to her mother the potential intellectual successes which she had been denied and the child had become conditioned to being satisfied only when she earned "first prize." The effort she had to expend, the negative satisfaction that came to her whenever "success" would release the ever-present fear of failure, represented major aspects of an intense inferiority complex which had gradually brought about withdrawal from situations where chances for success were small. Separation from the social aspects of reality was inevitable, of course, and the school had unwittingly intensified the situation by encouraging the child in her perfectionist drives. It would have been better to have looked for and aided the neglected aspects of this child's personality, and this could

have been done with comparative ease in her early school years. It may be true that a child gets great (and necessary) ego satisfaction out of succeeding with a native or acquired skill, but the personality cost is too great if the skill commands exaggerated emotional attention. The wise program subtly emphasizes one or two skills without lessening the social value of those aspects of a child's total personality which make him *mostly* like his contemporaries. To be different in some respects is healthy individualization, but to be simply different through exclusive attention to one or two skills (or to attention-bearing, compensatory mischief where skills have not been developed) is unhealthy isolation. The teacher, in developing the child's school program, particularly because she sees the child during more of his waking school day hours than his parents do, shares with the parents the responsibility for assuring this proper emphasis.

Parent-teacher relationships, so much better developed with the advent of Parent-Teacher Associations, represent an important psychological element in the teacher's influence. Parents fail to consciously recognize that teachers are parent-substitutes, but their actions often reveal unconscious recognition. They resent the hint, for example, that their children's school difficulties are due to inadequate training or intelligence, just as teachers resent parents who, in trying to externalize their guilt for such shortcomings, "blame the teacher . . . she does not understand . . . she is picky," etc. The identification of parent with child is so intense an emotional factor in most cases that the parent subjectively lives through the child's experiences literally and cannot face the painful truth of limitations in their offspring. Difficulties work both ways, but even so the psychiatrist believes he is justified in expecting the teacher, better-trained, more experienced and better aware of these psychological mechanisms, to be more objective, less emotional. The teacher can simply show the parent that she recognizes and sympathizes with the parent's normal job and "normal" ex-

pectancy of children's misbehavior. She enlists the mother's quick cooperation by asking her for suggestions and explanations and easily puts the mother in the position of wanting to ask the teacher the same. Recognition of mutual problems and responsibilities promotes mutual cooperation. Such an understanding permits teachers to frankly picture a realistic picture of the child's school situation. Where similarly good rapport is effected with the father as well as the mother, prospects for optimum adjustment in the child are more than doubled. Individual conferences with parents will not be too frequent or time-consuming if common aims are aired and understood.

The emotional value of children in a teacher's life is another large factor. Children, it is assumed, represent a guarantee of eternity for their parents in the sense that parents are reborn in their babies, attend school again with them, suffer the uncertainties of romance and marriage with their adolescent offspring and become parents again when they become grandparents. This mechanism of perpetuation carries with it the conflict associated with weaning from and by parents, including the "mother-in-law situation." Teachers must attain emotional maturity indirectly, through sublimating love for their own unborn children in their pupils. They can and do succeed and ought consciously to recognize that their charges are children-substitutes who absorb and carry their influences and respond by varying degrees and kinds of respect and affection. A teacher cannot gain respect without showing it, expect confidence in return for ridicule, look for frankness by demanding it instead of earning it by being frank, or offer complaints after resenting complaints against her. In her greater maturity and wisdom, she well knows that a child will respond positively if his successes, however small and infrequent, are exploited. She is not prejudiced by subjective attitudes in sex, manners, appearance, color or race or simple mannerisms. Ideas like: "all boys after the fourth grade are unmanageable . . . girls

who are boy-crazy cannot be trusted . . . a sloppy child has a sloppy mind . . . I can't stand Italians . . . Negroes"—are incompatible with the teacher's own comfort and are certainly unfair to the children. Merely agreeing that "it is better not to be

Libido (I want, I love), and that they motivate all behavior. Treatment which promotes their favorable expression is theoretically better than any which denies or frustrates. Briefly, eight possible treatment methods are available:

| | | | | | |
|---|--------|----------|--------------|-----------|--|
| 1 | Ego | positive | constructive | Favorable | To the child's personality development |
| 2 | Ego | negative | constructive | | |
| 3 | Libido | positive | constructive | | |
| 4 | Libido | negative | constructive | | |
| 5 | Ego | positive | destructive | Harmful | |
| 6 | Ego | negative | destructive | | |
| 7 | Libido | positive | destructive | | |
| 8 | Libido | negative | destructive | | |

that way" does not cure these emotionally-toned ideas. They are too firmly fixed and too old to be consciously sloughed, for they have been produced by situations of that sort when the teacher played the rôle of the child. To overcome such fixations requires an honest recognition of their existence and explanation, to say the least. Such crippling of ideation is least apt to occur in schools where principals and teachers honestly reveal their problems to each other. The offending child offends because of some discord in his emotional progress and he needs understanding treatment even if he does not deserve it. Society, through the teacher, softens offensive drives through an understanding defensive attack better than through "punishment." One teacher counts as her sincerest admirer a bully whose boasted claims of disobeying her were dissolved through asking him for suggestions as to how she might best handle a classmate with symptoms which were actually just like his. Personal rejections by children, usually based on false premises or unexplainable prejudices, can be met only through defensive measures. Teachers, in so many respects like parents, are in an enviable position because work with children is the best sublimation for childlessness.

Marion Kenworthy has evolved an analytic plan of treatment which teachers can easily modify to suit their purposes. It is believed that there are two principal satisfying drives in life: *Ego* (I want to be) and

Whatever the nature of the child's misbehavior, only constructive measures will be truly curative. It is inconceivable that a child with many symptoms of distressing behavior lacks at least one behavior asset. The emotional value of any personality asset increases when attention is drawn to it and at least some of the emotional tension is accordingly drained away from the unacceptable behavior to which the child has previously been (unconsciously) drawn for release of emotional tension. A case example may more clearly emphasize this concept:

A, a boy of nine, resorts to bluffing, boasting, mischievous classroom behavior. Analysis suggests that it is compensation for marked intellectual inferiority to his older brother, whose superior intelligence and achievement record have unfavorably emphasized A's ordinary capacities. He has come to "hate" school by the time he has reached the fourth grade and now seeks to "prove" (rationalization) that school is unnecessary for future success. His teacher sets up a plan of reconstruction like this:

(1) *Ego-positive-constructive*, the most important treatment element: She draws attention, by open praise, to A's fine handwriting, and charges him with responsibility for the bulletin board. She also asks his "advice" occasionally, especially with regard to playground matters, in order to transpose mischief-satisfactions into responsibility (ego-inflating on a wholesome level) satisfactions.

(2) *Ego-negative-constructive*: She tries, as

long as class room balance is not seriously harmed, to ignore his clownish behavior, thereby denying that type of satisfaction. Wholesome indifference to attention-bearing misbehavior sooner or later forces the child to seek only acceptable means, for only then can he get attention.

She has carefully refrained, meantime, from ego-positive-destructive attention through open ridicule, open scolding or sneering, or further intensifying negative drives through "punishment" which might momentarily relieve her own feelings. Also, she has resorted very little or not at all to ego-negative-destructive measures like refusing to recognize or talk to the boy.

(3) *Libido-positive-constructive*: The teacher tries to get the boy to feel she *likes* him. Herein lies the value to the child of a *personal* relationship, as through sharing an after-school job with him, routinely greeting him pleasantly in spite of his misbehavior, saying nice things about him to his mother, and, unless he rejects it as a sign of being "teacher's pet," carrying it even to walks to the street car, etc. He comes to feel a sense of mutual "belonging" wherever she is concerned and sooner or later gets healthy release and support through confiding in her.

(4) On the *Libido-negative-constructive* plane she again makes use of indifference. She avoids recourse to negative and positive destructive measures, which include rebuffs to his friendly advances ("punishment," negative) or openly

tells him she "despises" or "hates" him ("punishment," positive).

A teacher, who is self-effacing, objective in the right measure, and challenged by the urge to defend the offender because she knows he is gradually disarmed by such measures, will succeed with the above plan much more often than through resorting to repressive and suppressive techniques. She is well prepared to apply psychiatric principles because she understands the "group personality" as well as the child's, but avoids, as long as she can, the rationalizing, conscience-salving defense that the child has to be sacrificed "for the good of the group." There are very few fixedly-disordered children, and very few isolated behavior situations which require such sacrifice. The contributions made by a psychiatrist, who is primarily a consultant, or by a visiting-teacher, who is, better than that, a teaching specialist, are of value only to teachers whose own emotional integration and mental hygiene training are adequate. Resistance by the others will convince them that these methods are "pure theory" or even pernicious. It is not too much to say that the New School advances only as fast as its teachers are willing and able to individualize its pupils.

Architecture

First the stanch "vertical" of upward look,
Then the supported roof, horizon-lined,
Then the slow curve, the spanning dome that took
The sun's own path, and with the sun declined.

So man built walls and roofs to shelter him,
Embodied symbols of the world he saw
And heard and felt, a gallant world yet grim,
Governed by cool uncompromising law.

But once when morning sun-rays found the dew
Slantingly through a Druid oak and built
Tall tents of light, in awe he stood—and knew
The law that sets a bronze oak leaf a-tilt.

He dreamed again—and built to crown the height
A gray cathedral that let in the light.

ETHEL LOUISE KNOX

The Unit of Work and Subject-Matter Growth

MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

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IT IS hard to realize that the type of education known as "Progressive" has been in the process of evolution in this country from fifteen to twenty years. It began in the private schools but its survival today to a large degree is the result of experimentation and modification in our great public school systems. It is interesting to trace its development through these two decades and see where it has changed and what are its possibilities for the future.

The fundamental theories with which this new education started were:

1. That interest is essential to the best learning.
2. That true self expression comes only in an atmosphere of freedom.
3. That the project, or large unit of work, will secure all the necessary skills and learnings.

These principles still remain basic to progressive education both in private and public schools, but with significant modifications, particularly in regard to the unit of work. Let us see what those modifications are.

In the first place, progressive education still believes that interest is the best drive for work; but it no longer believes that all interests must emanate from the children. Definite and valuable leads for work will come frequently from the children's suggestions; but many will come from experiences planned by the teacher. Others will rise from problems found in books, and still others will be wholly acceptable to the children though suggested and planned in advance by the teacher.

Education also believes that activity is a necessary state of childhood and that interest springs from it; but it recognizes the reality of mental as well as physical activities. Of course, most children enjoy hammering and sawing, but they also enjoy a

well conducted arithmetic drill, or a period of silent reading. Indeed, it might be well to mention at this point the fact that many children, even in the primary, enjoy these mental activities more than the manual variety. In our zeal for results in terms of orange crates, children have been forced to do manual work that they never in the world would have initiated and that is actually distasteful to them. In the interest of fair play as well as education, therefore, it is well to remember that an activity curriculum involves both physical and mental types of activities, and let us not underestimate the latter.

Modern education continues to grow in the belief that the schools must allow the child sufficient freedom to express himself honestly and to develop into an independent human being; but it does not confuse liberty with license. Freedom in a social world involves daily growth in self control. Freedom does not mean lawless individualism but a continuous effort at self-discipline, an understanding of and sympathy for the other person, that make social life possible.

The new education has proved that the best teacher is not the stern task-master, the mere auditor of countless recitations, but the wise guide and helper. She plans interesting experiences, guides the thinking and working of the children and above all sees today's unit of work at long range. Such a teacher launches an Indian unit not as a joyful excuse for building tepees, evolving drums and war dances, but as another means of helping children understand society, government, the relation of the individual to the home, the home to the tribe. The children, with such a teacher, come to see the common problems of this big human family. Together, teacher and children discover how alike Indian children's interests are to those of other children, how

Indian mothers care for their babies, prepare food and clothing, and how the Indian father must provide that food and the raw materials that are used for the shelter and the clothing of the family, even as our fathers do today. This is the modern ideal of the teacher; one who is able to guide her children's thinking and working because she sees her units of work not merely as so many daily periods but at long range; today's work in terms of many tomorrows.

Psychology and psychiatry have further modified educational principles. We are no longer concerned solely with the intellectual development of the school child, but with the harmonious all-round development of that child. The school no longer asks merely, "What has the child learned today?" but "What kind of a child is John becoming? As he learns in school, how is he developing physically? Is he emotionally stable? What are his secret day dreams? Is he building a normal sense of success in the school room? Is he a happy child?" In short, the new education looks at the whole child.

The chief modifications progressive education principles have received in the public schools, however, are twofold:

1. A renewed emphasis on mastery of the skills (reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic).
2. A reaffirmation of the value of a definite body of informal knowledge.

Turning to the skills first, it became evident in the experimental years of progressive education that the project or unit of work did not guarantee sufficient drill in the tool subjects to insure mastery, particularly in these strategic years of the primary. Therefore, it became evident that, in addition to the episodic demands for reading, spelling, writing and number involved in a unit, there must be carefully planned, daily drills in such of those skills as the grade warranted. There must, for instance, be daily sequential drills in reading for the primary grades and similarly planned sequences in arithmetic for the intermediate grades. Public schools facing the fact that a large proportion of their children terminate their

school days with the sixth grade can never escape the fact that the basic responsibility of the elementary school is to send these children out into the world with a fair mastery of these skills. No theory of education can survive in the public schools that leaves these skills to chance. Progressive education has been continually and rightfully challenged by the conservative educators on this question. Its survival and success in the public schools has been the result of a frank acceptance of the fact that units of work must always be supplemented by daily drill in the tool subjects whether correlated with the unit or not.

Last of all, progressive education now realizes that it must provide for a continuous growth in vital, informational knowledge. The old way of doing this was by way of small doses of subject-matter. Samuel Chester Parker used to call this, "the patchwork quilt type of curriculum"; a little patch of reading, another of geography, still another of history, all unrelated. The new method is through what Parker also called, "large meaningful units of interest." Some educators have called these "projects." Other "units of work," still others "activities." The name is of minor importance, just so the one you adopt involves the concept of a unit that is so meaningful to the children that it:

1. Challenges their whole hearted interest.
2. Rouses their curiosity.
3. Calls out problem solving.
4. Gives rise to creative endeavor.
5. Is so rich in content that it involves several or most of the so called subjects (history, geography, English, art, science) and the major skills (reading, writing, spelling, number).

Now, the unit of work brings us to the heart of our problem. Every teacher and principal who is experimenting with the progressive education type of work in a public school system has certain questions that trouble her. The first one that comes particularly from the primary, where children's initiative has been stressed is, "If units of work are to rise from the children's interests, how can you plan your work in ad-

vance and how will you know where you are going?" The intermediate teacher adds, "Our problem is further complicated by the *Course of Study*. How can we follow the course of study and still have activities initiated by the children? Or, suppose we decide to have these self initiated units at all costs, how can we guarantee growth in subject-matter that is in anyway commensurate with the course of study requirements?" These questions are really the same and simmer down to a strategic problem. "Shall we let children's interest determine the curriculum and so abandon courses of study, or is it possible to have a course of study and still preserve children's interests and initiative?"

May I say first of all, and with emphasis, I do not believe for one moment that we can do away with the course of study. In this age of specialization, you and I cannot be experts in English, mathematics, history, art, science. We need the specialist with his command of a rich and exact body of

the subject-matter expert, the principal, the classroom teacher and the administrator, there is every reason to believe that they can build a course of study far richer in content and significance than anyone of us, single handed, can create out of the episodic, daily interests of a group of children. No, we cannot by any means, throw over the course of study. How then can we plan units of work that guarantee growth in the subject-matter requirements of a pre-planned curriculum?

An intermediary is necessary between the dynamic, ever changing interests of children on the one hand, and, on the other, this dangerously static body of information and skills represented by the *Course of Study*. The real experience seems obviously the intermediary needed. By real experience I mean sometimes, taking the children away from their books and school rooms to visit the city post office, railroad terminal, farm, maple sugar camp, docks, markets, factories, gardens, parks, libraries, histori-



First hand experience with ducks.

information to guide us in choosing that portion of the large field for the experience of elementary school children. There is no doubt that these subject-matter specialists need also the guidance of principals and teachers who know children and the administrator who knows buildings and budgets. However, given all these specialists:

cal collections, whatever the environment has to offer that will enrich the body of information stressed by the course of study. Needless to say, the course of study should build on these environmental possibilities. Some times the real experience may be brought into the classroom, instead of taking the children out. For instance, the proc-

ess of making candles, or even paper, of binding books, making indoor gardens, raising pigeons, or canaries, making and keeping aquaria, arranging loan collections, et cetera; all of these may take place in the classroom. So the real experience may be of two varieties, the kind that takes teacher and children out into the community and the kind that may happen in the school-room itself.

The importance of such actual experiences can scarcely be over-estimated. In the primary grades they are essential because the young child has not enough background of experience to interpret correctly much that he sees and hears. His concepts are muddled to an unbelievable extent because of this lack of experience.

An amusing example of this happened in a slum neighborhood of one of our large cities. An earnest young first grade teacher was trying to launch

a farm unit by showing her children pictures of farms. A farm unit, by the way, was just about as sensible for those tenement children as subways and elevated railways would be for six-year-olds in a rural school. However, the teacher was hopefully showing country landscapes and letting the children label such things as they recognized. "Trees," they chanted—"grass, clouds, a road." "And, what are these?" asked the teacher, pointing to a little flock of sheep against a brownish hillside that made a little spotty, brown, green, and white mass. Now, you and I, knowing sheep from experience, would have recognized the artist's sketchy representation of that distant flock, but to these children of the city

streets it was a puzzling question. No one knew. Finally one little girl, frowning intently, said, "Oh, I know, it's de dump." Now, the city dump was a part of her daily landscape, sheep she had never seen. The spotty mass was interpreted in terms of experience and lambs on a hillside looked like the neighborhood dump to her.

This is only one example which every teacher, principal, and supervisor can multiply. The younger the child, the more

limited his concepts are to specific experiences and the more inaccurate his interpretations of vicarious experiences. One of the first responsibilities of the kindergarten-primary then, is to furnish its young children with enough common experiences to build a curriculum rich in content and accurate in concepts.

As children grow older, the vicarious experiences found in books, pictures, lectures, conversations can be more safely trusted to carry ac-



A Kindergarten reproduction of the Natural History Museum.

curate meanings because the children have had more years in which to accumulate the background of experiences necessary for correct interpretation. Nevertheless, our intermediate grade children still need a selected number of experiences to furnish a common background for their work and to give vitality and meaning to school life. Through excursions and other types of real experiences, local history becomes real, the content and functions of museums is discovered, the technique of gathering and arranging loan collections is mastered, the realities of stores, airports, food distribution, transportation may become as vivid and absorbing as any movie.

Incidentally, this is especially desirable.

The movies have too much of a corner on glamour and romance of an impossible or undesirable sort. Children need to feel the romance lurking in our everyday world, the glamour of everyday work. The real experiences shared by a group of children under the skillful guidance of their teacher may accomplish this.

So, then, the teacher's first responsibility is to survey her course of study and see what experiences may be provided in her neighborhood or town that will challenge the children's interest and lead to the initiation of a worthwhile unit of work. For example, suppose the course of study calls for Colonial life; the teacher may plan a visit to the particular museum that has materials from that period of our American history. Or, if there is no museum in the town, she may plan a loan collection of such heirlooms as the community affords. In this way, the children may see examples of Colonial furniture, costumes, fire arms, warming pans, candle moulds, chap books, perhaps even a hornbook. Needless to say, the teacher supplements these actualities with the best pictures and reference books available.

What units of work may be expected to rise from such experiences? Here are some that have developed. One group learned to make bayberry candles in the old way. They demonstrated the process to another grade and lectured informally on other phases of home crafts in this period. Another group summed up their experiences in a dramatization. The play was written by the children and the costumes, scenery, and properties were also their handwork, reproducing as faithfully as possible all the correct details.

Still another group decided to make a room in a Colonial house. The room was about seven feet high and five feet square. Beaver board was used for the construction. The interior was a gem. Landscape wall paper covered the walls, a fireplace, correct in proportion and design, was very effective. Braided rugs and a few pieces of furniture gave the room a really livable appearance.

The question might well be asked, "Did not the manual work of this unit occupy an enormous amount of time that might better have been spent in reading?" It is a fair question and it is probable that our work will never be perfectly proportional between the two. Certainly so elaborate an

activity should not occur more than once or twice a year in the upper grades. The children's interest in it was intense. The teacher used each part of the project as a chance for problem solving. The landscape wall paper was not merely an art activity but a matter for reference reading and for



Spring brings daffodils to these children.

arithmetic (wall space, proportion of design to whole, number of repetitions of unit to space, etc.). The fireplace, rugs, and furniture were similarly treated and represented only fragments of the children's reading and museum study on Colonial houses.

Another example in the field of social science illustrates a slightly different point. Occasionally in a community some event will captivate the imagination of the children throughout the city and the progressive teacher can build upon this experience in several grades from several different points of emphasis. The first time Cleveland had the Air Races, they took place in August and Lindbergh and other famous

aviators were there. Almost every child in Cleveland, either saw the field, or followed the stunts in the paper and by way of the radio, with breathless interest. Naturally, in September, our schools burst with air-mindedness. In one of the public schools of the progressive type, I saw this happen. In the first grade a large airplane was constructed. It was large enough for a pilot and two passengers. The last touch of realism was added when the children persuaded the teacher to borrow the school vacuum cleaner from the janitor and run it during the flights. This lent the proper whir and noise, and the passengers alighted much thrilled. This was a typical play unit and remained largely on the play level. The fourth grade in the same school became interested first in the type of planes in the races. They made models of many varieties and learned more details about them than most adults could absorb. Later their interest turned towards air routes and in the study of these routes, these children learned more place geography than anyone would have thought possible in a fourth grade. Next door, the fifth grade started with the same interest in the air races, but went on to the evolution of transportation from ancient days to 1931. Visits to museums and to libraries yielded rich information and the theme became an absorbing one. The sixth grade studied all forms of modern transportation in an equally thorough way, comparing nations with each other in the development of transportation facilities and degree of prosperity and civilization.

Here we see a temporary civic experience catching the enthusiasm of large numbers of children at different age levels and yielding rich content for the curriculum. The basic experience and interest was the same in each grade, but the work was carried on with enriched social meanings and informational values in each succeeding grade.

Turning to another school subject that is all reality, let us look for a moment at science, particularly nature study. One of our schools, situated in the vicinity of a

ravine through which flows an active brook, uses that ravine at each grade level, but with a continually growing body of information. With the kindergarten children a trip to the ravine means play, exploration, collecting and labeling. This continues in the primary with the beginning of classification. By the third grade this account of the trip gives an idea of how these excursions have grown in meaning. This is a child's uncorrected record:

TRIP TO THE RAVINE

One day we went over to the Ravine.

We found many stones. Some of us found sharp stones and some found smooth. We found granite and sandstone. We found brown sandstone. The way you make sand you would take two sand stones and rub them together. We found shale and quartz. Some pieces of quartz are like little shells.

The shale is a stone that is flat. The heavy weight of shale make slate.

The rocks that are crumbled are crumbled by rain, water, roots of trees and the frozen ground.

The rocks that are not crumbled are called stratified rocks.

David Sayle was the traffic cop.

At the bottom we saw some bed rocks.

The shale maks clay.

The Ravine is very pretty.

The quartz stones are very pretty also.

They come in different colors.

The Ravine was made by little streams.

We went in couples.

The Humus is made by dekead leaves.

The glaciers brought granite. Granite came from Canada.

The shale broke its way through.

We saw two kinds of soil.

The color of shale is gray.

BETTY JANE, 3A

Obviously, nature study and social studies are the core subjects of the elementary school from the kindergarten through the sixth grade. First, because they offer a foundation of reality upon which information can grow in body and accuracy. Second, they usually involve several of the other subjects and skills. Both social studies and science not only bring reality into the classroom but while motivating much

of the other work of the grade, bring it into a large meaningful whole.

Oddly enough, this very virtue is also a danger because an Indian unit may promote some art work and considerable reading, but it will probably not lead to all the art activities the grade is capable of undertaking, nor to the regular sequential reading drill the children need daily. Starting and maintaining a balanced aquaria will lead to some arithmetic, may inspire a little art work, but will probably not involve any music experiences, nor encourage wide reading. In other words, the unit of work in the field of social studies or science is excellent for integrating to some extent the various subjects and skills of the class but it will not motivate all of them in balanced proportions. In order to guarantee enough drill in the tool subjects to give the children mastery, there must be daily, sequential drill in those skills.

This is a warning note. The big unit of work is fascinating both to the children and to the teacher, but it should not obscure the importance and enjoyment of those drills whose mastery is essential to efficiency. Likewise, in the arts, the unit will sometimes lead to a rich body of literature but little music and vice-versa. This means that throughout the grades there must be a steadily developing series of experiences in literature, music and art often quite apart from the big unit. Here the course of study in these fields helps out.

Another warning that needs to be sounded is that whether the unit is in the field of the social studies or science the teacher must remember that the activity is not an end in itself but is a joyous means to a less obvious end, namely the accumulation of a steadily growing body of concepts and information. These need to be checked by the teacher as thoroughly as possible. Everyone has seen elaborate structures of orange crates labeled post office or

grocery store in which the children play vaguely, often irrelevantly or not at all. This means, of course, that the activity lacks reality for the children and there is no clear residue of information and concepts to justify the activity. The teacher should keep some sort of record sheet on which she checks these intellectual results along with the manual. So a train unit shows not merely:

Children built a train of boxes large enough to carry both passengers and freight.

but also:

Children learned different kinds of cars and their uses: engine, coal car, freight train, pullman, day coach, parlor car, refrigerator cars, oil cars, caboose.

Children learned that sand is used to prevent trains sliding when the track is icy.

or, again:

Discussion brought out the necessity of every member of a train crew being a reliable person.

Such exact information and clear concepts are one of the chief objectives of a unit of work.

In conclusion, it becomes evident to any observer of progressive methods in our schools that their success depends to a large degree upon the teacher at the helm. It is she who guides the experiences and activities of the children today and sees them in terms of tomorrow. Working patiently with young children, she sees their immediate problems in relation to those broader problems of society. Such a teacher is an artist teacher. Much is said today about the children in our progressive schools being creative artists. I am inclined to think that no phase of creative expression surpasses in value the work of the teacher whose creativity expresses itself in the growing knowledge, personalities, and characters of her children.

Some Fundamental Principles in Education

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TOO frequently in education the words principle, concept, generalization, objective, goal, and aim, are used synonymously, when really the meanings to be conveyed, and the words themselves, are very different. Much discussion has centered around each of these words, and the danger and value of using them as synonyms. Much more time could well be spent on clearing these terms and in establishing an educational glossary, not that it would be accepted by everyone, but that it could be used as a working basis for clarifying ideas. In the absence of such a glossary it would seem desirable for every writer to state clearly what is meant by the terms he uses. It is with one word only that this article is most concerned, the word is *principle*. *Principle* is used here to mean a formulated truth growing out of experience.

Before considering existing principles of education, or formulating new ones perhaps it would be of value to look at principles of the three great sciences,—biology, psychology, and sociology—which perhaps contribute most to education. These principles are very clearly stated and well defined in Margaret Mathias' book, *The Beginnings of Art in the Elementary School*. She says, "The biologist has given us enlightening facts concerning the child's physical development:

1. Training is harmful when it precedes the development of the power to be trained. Training should, therefore, be given as the need for it arises and is evidenced by the children.
2. Physical and mental development are bound together; hence thinking and handwork are closely related.
3. Little children cannot remain still for a long time. Therefore, situations should be provided that encourage free bodily activity.

4. A condition of satisfaction is essential for development.

The psychologist also has revealed facts from which we may arrive at conclusions concerning the provisions for growth:

1. The educative process must start with, and utilize, the child's native equipment of traits, emotions, and capacities.
2. Thinking takes place only in the presence of a problem and involves three steps:
 - a. Presence of a problem
 - b. Search for means of solution
 - c. Testing the solution
3. The school should provide situations which will supply problems recognizing that:
 - a. Different children will solve the same problem in different ways.
 - b. The problems provided for must be such as will lead to growth and development.
 - c. The span of attention of little children is usually short.

The sociologist has shown that if an individual is to take his place as a member of a democratic group he must have:

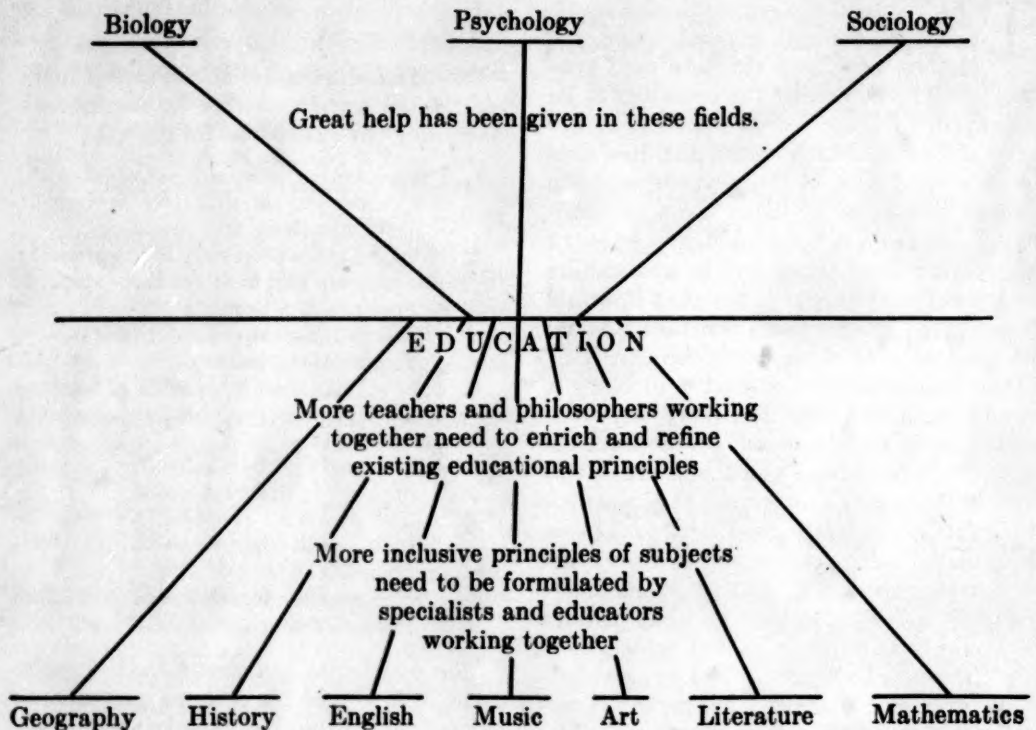
1. Ability to use individual liberty and to respect the rights of others.
2. Ability to give and take constructive criticism.
3. Ability to initiate.
4. Ability to lead as well as follow.

One has only to trace any given act of behavior, such as walking, reading, or creating through these scientific principles to see what contributions each makes separately and as a part of the sciences working together to further the education of the whole child.

With these fundamental truths as guides perhaps it would be wise to see what the specialists or recognized authorities—the historian, the geographer, the musician, the

literateur, or the reading specialist—has to offer in his particular field to help with the formulation of educational principles. Little has been done in these fields toward the publication of principles but a beginning has been made. Dr. Gerald Craig¹ has made a real contribution in the natural sciences,

man's interpretation of the universe"; "that a man can speak and write well when he has a thought clearly and simply in mind"; "that adaptation and understanding man's interdependence are fundamental to geography"; "that music is one of the greatest means of communication"; "that



Belle Boas² in art, and Dr. Neal Billings³ in the social sciences. Other groups are working on this big problem and certain technical phrases and words are slowly becoming a part of a subject. Now when beginning teachers, established teachers, specialists, educators, and administrators think of a subject they are beginning to think of the phrases or formulated truths of the subjects as well. "That art is both fine and industrial and cannot be separated"; "that literature seeks to reveal

the present is studied as a part of the past in order to help plan for the future"; all these and others are what is meant by fundamental truths allied with particular subjects which most of us in education should recognize and know.

No given subject has many principles. A few general principles are all that are needed together with smaller concepts, or groups of organized ideas, as a part of particular fields of a subject. The educator cannot formulate these principles and concepts. The specialist who has done the most valuable thinking in his field is most needed for this work, but he should not work alone. He needs the educator just as the educator needs him. The specialist has been looking

¹ Craig, Gerald S. *Certain Techniques Used in Developing a Course of Study in Science for the Horace Mann Elementary School*. Bureau of Publication, Teachers College, 1927.

² Boas, Belle. *Art in the Schools*. Doubleday, Page & Co., 1924.

³ Billings, Neal. *A Determination of Generalizations Basic to The Social Studies Curriculum*. Warwick and York, Inc., 1929.

at his subject as a unit in itself, while the educator has been looking at education as a whole, and has seen geography, history, literature, and music in relation to the other subjects, and as an important part of the major problem of educating children. Both the specialist and the educator need to work together; one supplements the other. Both contribute vitally to the growth of the child, to the growth of the understandings inherent in history, geography, music, art, and literature. It is to be hoped that more specialists will call upon more educators to help to formulate a few great truths that all teaching may be better.

With the principles of biology, psychology, and sociology, and with a few principles of particular subjects, as well as an expression of a definite need for more inclusive principles to cover particular fields, let us turn to education as a whole, and see what has been done. There are a few principles which we all recognize and when named each will read into them his own knowledge, his own experience, his own interpretation. It is to be regretted that each principle cannot be discussed thoroughly, but such elaboration is not possible, nor desirable in an article where just the problems are being brought forward.

Those principles of education most familiar to us are:

1. A knowledge of children, their capacities, abilities, and potentialities is most necessary.
2. The needs of children, physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally should be recognized and met.

3. Inherent interests of children should be used in learning situations.

4. Learning is a continuous process.

5. Self-activity is the basis of growth.

There is, of course, great room for discussion here, as to whether these statements are educational principles or principles of teaching. If they are principles of teaching then the large aims of education, "to bring about desirable changes in thought, feeling, and conduct," and "learning is vital and successful as it functions outside of school," and others, become the principles of education. Shall we keep these as aims toward which we are moving? Shall we use the above five principles as principles of education and enrich them and refine them? They are fundamental truths. If education is growth, and teaching is helping others to help themselves, and learning is remaking and reconstructing life, do not these principles belong to teaching, learning, and education as a whole? If one understands, applies, adheres, and enriches them, and constantly checks everything with the big aims of education will not education be moving in the right direction to achieve the definition so forcefully stated by Dr. Kandel, "Education is the slow maturing of the individual into the personality."

If after this work has been done will one be able to say what and where objectives, goals, aims, concepts, generalizations and principles really belong. How do they fit together? What is the whole picture? Whither all mankind together?

My Mother Said:

Don't be too fast in making up your mind,
Or saying what you will or will not do,
But once you have decided, let folks find
That they may utterly depend on you.

PETER A. LEA

Kindergarten Curricula Differentiated

NATALIE HASKINS

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ONE of the most significant problems facing the kindergarten of today is that of providing a curriculum sufficiently enriched to meet the developmental needs of four and five year old children without pushing them prematurely into the reading situation before the age most conducive to the acquisition of reading skills. With attendance at nursery schools becoming more and more general, kindergartens now gain entrants who, at the age of four, have already had one or two years nursery school experience. Social adjustments having thus been made at an early age these children show readiness for experiences of a rich nature in kindergarten.

Differentiation of curricula for four and five year kindergartens must be planned in recognition of the difference in the innate characteristics of children on the two developmental levels. To the casual observer such differences may seem slight; yet to the careful analyst it is apparent that during the early years of a child's life a few months' growth produces very different needs.

In the Bronxville School during the past year there have been four separate kindergarten groups in session. One group ranged in age from four to four and a half years when enrolled in September; the next group was from four and a half to five; the third ranged from five to five and a half; the fourth, a transition class, was from five and a half to six. Careful observation of these four groups showed some real differences to be present even between such closely related age-groups as these. One of the most striking differences was the progressive trend shown in the organization of children's activities. In the four-year group interests were largely individual, with practically no group spirit in evidence. In the four and a half-year group several interests recurred intermittently throughout the year among small groups of chil-

dren. Each time the interest recurred it varied in its form of expression; yet, at no time did the interest become universal in the group. In the five-year group several large units took the interest of the whole group and were carried out by the group in rather completed form. In the transition group a house remained as the center of interest of the entire group for several weeks with most of their activities growing out of this general interest.

Such definite growth in the organization of children's interests within a two year span of development implies the presence of real changes in the children's characteristics which must be taken into consideration in planning a curriculum to meet children's needs and provide for desired growth.

In planning a curriculum for any group of kindergarten children there are several general principles one must consider. First of all, one must know the characteristics of the specific group to be dealt with. This requires careful observation and analysis of the activities of the group in order to determine the present developmental status of the group.

Second, it is necessary to determine the extent to which one should enrich the interests evidenced. Certain it is that many of the interests of kindergarten children are best enriched only to the extent to which they themselves are able to exhaust the subject. One justifiable criticism of the activity program is the tendency to repeat the same unit of interest at successive age levels and thus to detract from the life value of the experience by presentation of such material at too early an age for the knowledge to really function in the lives of children. Probably most of the interests of kindergarten children should be met on the *why*, *what*, and *how* level, thus satisfying present needs and stimulating wholesale

attitudes of inquiry on a variety of subjects which may be more fully and naturally experienced at a higher level.

Third, one must be familiar with the natural stages of growth through which children pass in their use of various materials so as to give wise guidance toward the achievement of higher standards at succeeding age levels.

An example of how one may in practice actually plan their curriculum through consideration of children's characteristics may be seen in the analysis made with the writer's own group of kindergarten children this fall. The group analysis and curriculum

this activity over and over for several minutes at a time, varying it only by jumping in different positions. During the second week at school three boys amplified this activity by playing Humpty Dumpty. At first they chanted the rhyme as they jumped. Ted varied this by sitting down on the board, saying the whole rhyme and falling off at the proper juncture. After all three had repeated this as Ted had done, Myron stood up saying:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
He jumped out to fall
And here he goes bang.



A long plank placed with one end on the fence and the other on the ground was used each day as a medium for walking up and jumping off.

planning herein described took place during the first four weeks of school in a group of thirty children, ranging in age from four years four months to four years ten months. Careful individual records of the activities of the children were taken and later analyzed and formulated as general characteristics of this particular group.

A brief résumé of several of these general group characteristics follows:

ACTIVITY FOR ACTIVITIES SAKE

A long plank placed with one end on the fence and the other on the ground was used each day as a medium for walking up and jumping off. Some of the children repeated

The humor of Myron's jingle brought several others over to the game.

A set of movable steps on the playground furnished Jane and Peter the means of climbing to the top of a packing box. They walked up and down, up and down, over and over, chanting as they climbed, "Jane and Peter is up." "Jane and Peter going down down down."

Hollow blocks were used experimentally during these early days of school. First they were carried to the packing box and piled inside as seats for a boat. After sitting on them there for a few moments they were carried to the junglegym, where they served as baggage on the train. Neither the boat

nor train idea was carried further than calling "Choo-Choo," "Ding-dong," "All aboard," or "Ship ahoy." Primarily the interest was in the physical activity involved in carrying and piling blocks and climbing into the box and upon the jungle-gym.

The blocks in the kindergarten room were used to build enclosures. After the children sat inside the enclosure a few moments the blocks were taken down and carried to another location for repiling. Toy trains, boats, wagons and slides all furnished additional evidence of this interest in pure activity.

JOY IN PLAYING WITH SOUND

Closely tied up with the physical activity of this group was their joy in vocalization as evidenced in the chanting and calling of words and phrases in their play. Tudor, particularly proficient in nautical terms called out "Ship ahoy," "Haul in the anchor," "All aboard," each time he ascended the jungle gym or entered a packing box. Calls of "Taxi, Taxi," or "Choo-Choo, we're going" were ever present.

A group on the jungle gym were calling out rhyming words: "Choo-Choo, Too-Too Hoo-Hoo." Eddie said, "All aboard for Boogie Man" to which Tudor replied, "All aboard for Cookie man." And later "All aboard for Mt. Kisco, All aboard for Mt. Sisco."

One morning when the children arrived wood for the fireplace was being delivered. As the storeroom for the wood adjoins the kindergarten rooms, it was necessary for the children to stand aside to let the men pass through. One by one the chant was taken up, "Here comes the wood man! Here comes the wood man!" each time the man appeared. This chant had a definite tune as well as rhythm and later was utilized as a beginning of singing experience with the group.

CURIOSITY, A UNIVERSAL CHARACTERISTIC

The first few days found the teachers answering a veritable barrage of questions such as "What is this?" "What makes that

noise?" "Why does that bell ring?" "Where is this or that?" as the children explored their new environment.

On the playground a group was lined up against the fence watching a class at work in the gymnasium. Said Phyllis, "Wouldn't you like to know what kind of dancing that is?" Barbara exclaimed, "What a dance that is in there!" and persistent Eddie called out, "What *are* they doing in there?"

Christopher stooped down to look more closely at his shadow and said, "You can see the shadows here. See here's your shadow." Teacher: "Yes, and there's yours." Christopher looked at both shadows and then at the sun. Teacher: "Do you know what makes the shadows?" Christopher: "No, tell me." Teacher: "The sun shines on you and makes your shadow on the ground." The next day Christopher was in a group of six children and they were all identifying their shadows saying, "There's you," "It's me." Christopher said, "The sun makes 'em."

Pine cones, sea shells, flowers, nuts, leaves, and other nature materials brought in by the children were all greeted with either information concerning them or questions about the less familiar ones.

EXPERIMENTAL USE OF MATERIALS

Use of materials during these early weeks was largely in the experimental, rather than purposive, stage.

In preparing paints for use the three primary colors of red, yellow and blue were placed in the easel tray. The only technique given for their use was that of wiping the brush on the top of the glass to prevent dripping. This suggestion was given to the individual child after he had experienced the dripping difficulty for himself. With the exception of two children all the pictures painted were entirely lacking in any attempt at representation. They consisted in trying of colors, in filling up the space on the paper and in experimenting with shape. The next stage following this brought experimentation in the mixing of colors. Barbara called to the teacher gleefully, "Look, look, I put yellow on blue and its green." Others discovered that red and blue

make purple and that brown is the product of all three primary colors. After these discoveries were made, green, purple, and brown paints were presented for use also.

Other materials used experimentally were blocks, sand, and woodworking tools as well as climbing apparatus.

LACK OF INDIVIDUALISTIC PLAY

Peter, Jimmy, Bill, and Tudor are all graduates of the same nursery school and

dropped off from sheer exhaustion, Peter and Jimmy met Ford's cries of "I want the wagon," with the rejoinder "Yes, but we had it first."—and so the whole process of building this same social consciousness in Ford begins.

Numberless other examples serve to form this generalization that, as a whole, most of the play is carried on in groups of two or three children, rather than wholly individualistic.



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hence are past masters in the art of sharing materials and regulating their own cooperative play. Their necessary adjustment comes with the interference of other children who have not as yet built up group, or even individual, standards of social behavior.

Ford and Ted have had no previous opportunity to play with children their own age. Ford, wanting the wagon which Jimmy and Peter are using, grasps the back of the wagon and then screams when he is dragged across the playground. When the teacher comes over to Ford, who has finally

SHORT SPAN OF CONCENTRATION

Most of the play interests change frequently and rarely carry over to repetition on the following day. Lack of purpose in activity naturally tends to decrease the span of concentration on one activity.

Keeping in mind these six general characteristics which careful analysis showed to be present in my group, the next step was that of planning in general the type of curriculum which would best satisfy these apparent needs.

Considering the physical needs of young children and the over-stimulation which in-

duction into a new school experience naturally brings, the children were kept for only an hour and a half during the first week of school. For this period an out-door activity period was chosen as best offering ample opportunity for acquaintance with a wide variety of materials under conditions producing the least possible strain. Following this activity time with a period for toileting and a drink of water, the children were then dismissed.

Because we have an out-door playground equipped for the exclusive use of kindergarten children this out-door activity period is continued as a regular part of the morning program as long as the weather permits. In order not to limit the activities of the group in the use of physical apparatus, easels are hung on the fence for use with paints and crayons.



In order not to limit the activities of the group to use physical apparatus, easels are hung on the fence for use with paints and crayons.

interest demands. Besides meeting the need of children for fresh air and sunshine, we find that this out-door period provides the opportunity for engaging in a wide variety of activities without necessitating many of the restrictions necessarily placed on activity within the school room in order to avoid over-stimulation and strain.

During the second week of school we added a half hour rest period which we consider as a vital part of our regular program. Having a separate restroom equipped with cots we are able to make this a period of real relaxation. We thus combat the over-fatigue which is a natural product of membership in a group of thirty children and send the children home to lunch in a less fatigued state.

The third week a short group period was introduced following the toileting period and preceding the rest period. This period, which is gradually lengthened as the span of attention lengthens, is used for conversation, music, and stories, which are interwoven in a most informal manner.

With the above general plan of organization in operation, the content of the curriculum becomes a natural outgrowth of the children's own interests, guided and enriched according to the teachers' best judgment of their value to children at this age level.

The children's interest in chanting and vocalizing furnished the basis for beginning of singing experiences. The woodman's song, which the children sang while the wood was being delivered, was recalled to them during the group period. Billy at once wanted to sing it and after he had done so others wanted a turn. Singing this "song"

brought suggestions from the children of songs they could sing and so the desire to sing was at once established and gratified.

The innate curiosity of this group displayed itself often along science lines and so opened up a wide range of nature experience possibilities. Watching and feeding the school rabbits and pigeons brought interesting contributions from members of the group. Billy told of his rabbit and showed us pictures in one of the books of a rabbit like his. Speaking from his own experience he said, "Rabbits need a cool hole for the summer or they will die from the heat." Others spoke of how hot it gets in the summer, of what they did this summer and then the teacher recalled their interest to the rabbit by saying, "Why do rabbits get so warm in the summer?" Eddie said, "They run hard." The teacher then asked, "What kind of a coat do they wear?" Ted said, "Oh, fur." Teacher: "And is it warm?" Ted: "Yes, people wear fur coats in winter." Billy said, "Rabbits' coats grow on." Ted said, "They can cut it, they cut my dog's hair." Billy said "Then it grows again." Eddie said, "They need to cut it in the summer." As no child disputed this statement the teacher said, "They do shear dogs in the summer but they don't usually shear rabbits, Eddie." Billy recalled the interest in order to drive home his point saying, "Yes, and they do need a cool hole in the summer."

The numberless other interests exhibit-

ed in the group are utilized as they arise.

With such a wealth of interests, the whole problem of presenting an enriched curriculum for the four year level consists of satisfying the needs of the group at this developmental level. Because of the individualistic tendencies and the short interest span present at this level we may best leave the organization of group unit of interest to a later age. At this age level let us provide the child with ample opportunity for experimental use of materials, strengthen his learning through wise guidance, broaden his interest in and understanding of his environment through a variety of rich experiences in science, art, literature, and music; foster the development of those social traits which will enable him to live happily with others and encourage and cherish all efforts at creative and dramatic expression of his own inner feelings.

The five year old child, having had previous opportunity to experiment with materials and having developed some skill in their use becomes more purposive in his activity. His growing interest in others, coupled with his lengthening span of interest from day to day, makes this age level a propitious one to begin the planning of experiences in terms of a general group interest. Such units in order to produce the desired growth in the members of the group must be kept on the experiential basis and must meet the developmental needs for the particular group for which they are planned.

Perspective

A hill no higher than a bush may bar
The sight of mountains towering afar,
Yet draw away; the peaks again will rise,
The hill be less than passing shadows are.

STANTON A. COBLENTZ

A Critical Analysis of the Activity Curriculum in the Elementary School

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THE pioneer work of establishing an activity curriculum in the public schools of today has developed a group of open-minded, thoughtful teachers who are now pausing to examine critically the results of their labors in order that the good qualities of such a curriculum may be bettered and the poor eliminated. The stock-taking process discloses the following assets.

1. An activity curriculum centers attention upon child interests and needs, recognizing that the child, as a member of the community, needs help for the best possible development of his powers at each stage of his growth toward an ultimately desirable, adult citizen.
2. It attempts to provide a life-like environment where the child can live and work under normal conditions. School becomes a place where the child meets challenging problems, attempts to work out answers and judge the results of his labor in a life-like fashion.
3. It allows the child to learn by doing and experiencing and frees him from the complete domination of adults. If the classroom needs equipment and materials for the furtherance of its program and no funds are available, the children with the teacher face the problem and attempt to solve it. If knowing how to make change accurately and rapidly is necessary for the child who is to sell the class-made products at the bazaar, the children meet the necessity and learn to handle money efficiently. It is not what the teacher says the children should study but what the situation in the children's school living demands, that is learned.
4. It gives the proper stimulus to learning, as the child learns because he needs or wishes to do so in order that he may answer his problem or complete his project. This usually results in increased learning and greater retention.
5. It places the subject matter or content of school subjects in its natural setting, not as a thing apart to be learned for its own sake but as a needed portion of each life undertaking. The tool subjects, such as writing and spelling, assume their proper places as means of achievement, with the result that more content and greater proficiency in the use of skills are actually demanded by the child himself as he really needs them in working out his projects satisfactorily.
6. It insures working and playing for and with others as a regular part of the school life with consequent opportunities to learn to lead, to follow wisely and to develop a sense of responsibility toward the social group.
7. It demands that as much attention be paid to the development of right attitudes and habits as to the acquiring of knowledge and skills, thus providing for the harmonious development of the whole child.

With such strong assets the continuance of the activity or unit of work as a basis for present day curricula seems amply justified and it becomes increasingly necessary to find the weaknesses in such curricula that they may be eliminated as rapidly as possible. Thoughtfully critical supervisors and teachers are finding the following liabilities in prevalent practice:

1. The activity curriculum fails to plan adequately for progress within a school year or for a program insuring sufficient progress through the years of the elementary school. Lack of progress is evident not only in the acquisition of knowledge but also in skills, in habits, and in attitudes. Examples of the repetition of the same activities worked out by the same children in different grades are so multiple as to make further comment unnecessary. Most schools are now alive

to this difficulty and are endeavoring to remedy the matter by suggesting grade limitations for commonly interesting activities supplemented by records on a large school chart showing each grade's activities and the subject matter covered by each activity. But little has been done to assure progress in habits, skills, and attitudes. One school found, upon examining the records of desirable habits proposed by the different grades for special attention, the following:

Grade One

- I come on time.
- I am polite.
- I finish what I start.
- I clean up my work.
- I do my best.

Grade One A

- I work quietly.
- I finish what I start.
- I do not waste material.
- I clean up quickly and quietly.

Grade Two

- Did I go through the halls quietly?
- Did I listen when someone was talking?
- Did I do my work in a quiet, careful way?
- Did I clean up neatly?

Grade Three

- Do I disturb others?
- Do I use my time well?
- Am I prompt?
- Do I clean up quickly and quietly?
- Am I courteous?

Grade Four

- Am I neat?
- Am I polite?
- Do I waste time?
- Do I know what to do?
- Do I interrupt?

These records offer concrete examples of the result of the absence of a planned program for the development of social habits. While the same good habits are needed throughout life special attention need hardly be given to the development of the same habits through four years of school and a progressive program would plan for the children to meet increasingly greater demands in social adjustments that they might grow naturally into assuming adult responsibilities.

2. It fails to provide a well worked out plan for developing to the point of proficiency

in use, the skills for which activities supply the need. Making cookies for the second grade sale requires multiplying the cookie recipe by five but does not teach the children how to multiply. Dozens of similar needs for multiplication may arise during the carrying out of activities but the learning of the process cannot be left to such hit or miss occasions. Teaching the process must follow a carefully worked out program so that the child proceeds one step at a time and ease of learning brings the satisfaction of accomplishment and joy in use. This need for the adequately planned development of skills has been generally recognized in teaching children how to read but too frequently neglected in teaching other skills and processes which are socially useful.

3. It too frequently allows a superficial selection and organization of material and the children instead of learning through doing merely "do." Without help children cannot realize the wealth of content available to enrich a unit being studied, and little children need much help in organizing the material which they do have so that it is of real value to them. In one third-grade class a great deal of time had been spent in making a pueblo but upon being questioned by a visitor the children disclosed very hazy ideas as to the habits and customs of the Indians. A class discussion heard by the visitor revealed a woeful lack of knowledge of the difference between the various tribes of the North American Indians. One child's picture of a pueblo included a totem pole and was not commented upon.
4. Overemphasis, underemphasis, and improper evaluation frequently result from a program of learning which allows the children to follow any worthy group interest. Second and third grade children seem to learn much (frequently most inaccurately!) about the Japanese, the Dutch or the Eskimo but strangely enough have seldom or never been known to become interested in the English, French, Italians, or Russians! A large gap in a well rounded education may be left when a series of activities call for much addition and multiplication but no long division.

Examining this list of deficiencies occurring in the working out of activity curricula reveals the fact that the weaknesses are not inherent in the theory supporting the use of such curricula but rather discrepancies which have occurred in the method of procedure, which can be remedied if given thought. Programs can be planned to insure progress; skills can be developed, *when needed*, in a most scientific and proficient manner without sacrificing any interest on the part of the children who thoroughly enjoy the satisfaction of accomplishment, and interesting content adds to the children's pleasure in any unit of work.

It is obvious that the determining factor in the success or failure in the working out of any curriculum, is the teacher. Upon her ability and skill depends the whole learning situation. Are the children to have the

opportunity of selecting, planning, and working out a project? Is worthwhile content to be made available? Are the "leads" to interesting additional learnings to be followed? Are skills to be acquired efficiently? Is the school room to be a place for real living and for learning to co-operate and to assume responsibilities? The answer is always, "It depends upon the teacher."

Those, then, who have the success of the activity curriculum at heart will seek teachers who have been well prepared to meet the large demands of present day classrooms; teachers with the right attitude toward opportunities for learning, those with a wealth of knowledge as well as with an understanding of child nature, and teachers with enough imagination and vision to be a stimulating influence in the classroom.

A Study Outline Based on this Issue of Childhood Education

Suggestions for using the contents of this number of Childhood Education may be obtained from the Executive Secretary at Headquarters, 1201-16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. These suggestions have been prepared for the benefit both of branches of the Association for Childhood Education and of individual readers.

A Four-Page Leaflet Contains

1. An outline of major issues contained in the articles of this magazine.
2. Summarizing questions which draw the reader's attention to basic ideas underlying *The New School*, its philosophy, its teaching techniques and curriculum, and to specific problems which teachers are facing.
3. A brief bibliography suggestive of further reading.

The leaflet also contains detailed descriptions of four ways to organize and conduct discussion groups.

Copies of this study outline and discussion guide are being sent to presidents and secretaries of branch organizations of the Association for Childhood Education. Copies are also available to any one upon application.

Social Studies in the Lower School

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THE term social studies is one which many people have felt applies to a certain type of work in the upper grades, but they have failed to see its significance in the kindergarten and first three grades. Progressive school systems have become famous because of the excellent types of activity programs which they have promoted and vast sums of money have been spent on equipment and materials. Classroom teachers, principals, and supervisors have come under the spell of this program. Children have been guided along the lines of their interests whether they are worthy interests or not. Now, suddenly there seems to be indications of a strong reaction on the part of some administrators against certain aspects of activity work which have been considered progressive.

One reason for their change of attitude is expense, but expense would probably not be such a serious consideration if the results in social understanding had been more evident. Right here one must be fair and acknowledge that the activity program has helped teachers in the lower grades to become less subject-minded, and it has helped children to develop habits, attitudes, and skills. However, a total lack of understanding on the part of children of the significance of the units upon which they have worked indicates a loss of content and laxity of definite goal, which is regrettable.

For example, children often engage in working out a farm unit. They spend weeks in constructing a miniature farm which is a very acceptable piece of manual work. However, when one begins to question as to the concepts the children have acquired about farm life and the feelings that they have begun to develop about the importance of the farm as a source of our daily food supply, he is surprised at the dearth of ideas. Too often the tendency is to em-

phasize the manual side of the activity which is important and to ignore the content side which is as important. In other words, teachers have been satisfied to have children produce a miniature farm, without helping them, through such reproduction, to interpret some of the social aspects of farm life which are fundamental and which are within their comprehension.

In some instances one can account for this failure to help children understand their environment by the fact that teachers themselves lack sufficient background. The teacher's background is a very important factor in a social science program; a background for trains, aeroplanes, farm life, and other aspects of the environment which command children's interests is necessary. Where it is lacking, the vague, uncertain ideas about their surroundings are unchecked and the children pass into the intermediate grades, where they are supposed to be ready for geography and history, with gross misconceptions. One third grade teacher who was ready to begin definite work in geography with her group discovered that a number of her children thought that all grains come from the same seed and that what the farmer gives the seed by way of care determines whether it develops into wheat, rye, or some other grain. Then, too, there is a more serious aspect which may result from a lack of background on the part of the teacher. It is the danger of actually giving false ideas and building up misconceptions. Intermediate grade teachers often voice a complaint because of the erroneous ideas that children have acquired in the lower grades. An example of this is the teacher who explained to her children that codfish are salty because they live in salt water. One person of experience, finding her children interested in the fire department, commenced a unit. Suddenly, the teacher dis-

covered that her notions of a fire department and those of her children differed. She had not been in a fire station since she was a child. Her ideas were vague and hazy and she was wholly unprepared to act as an intelligent guide in the construction of a modern fire station and to interpret the significance of the fire department as a means of protection in the community. When teachers are found as insufficiently prepared as the above examples would indicate, there is little wonder that such work is questioned. An eminent educator implied in a recent address that there is no limit to what a kindergarten-primary teacher must know, because of the varied interests of children, which need to be interpreted.

Before we pursue our discussion further and face problems which arise in connection with a social study program for the lower grades, let us be in accord about our understanding of what social studies in the primary grades mean. Generally speaking, it seems clear, as has been said by Alice Temple and others, that social studies mean the experiences which are provided by the school, primarily for the purpose of extending the child's social understandings, or his conception of the social aspects of the world about him. Such a program is of an integrated nature and deals with some of the materials of geography, history, natural science, and civics.

How does this differ from a straight activity program?

1. The social study program presupposes that there are definite social concepts of which a little child can begin to get some understanding in the lower school. Such concepts as the meaning of interdependence, justice, tolerance, cooperation, patriotism, health, safety and recreation, and others have their roots as far down as the kindergarten. If these are properly nurtured in the lower school, one can expect a child to enter the intermediate school with a beginning of an understanding of what each means.
2. Those interested in a general social study program believe that there is an important body of subject-matter in which children are interested and which can be

organized in large meaningful units. Through these units the child can acquire worthwhile ideas and meanings, as well as habits, attitudes and skills, which will lay a foundation for work in geography, history and science in the intermediate school. Not only will the child gain social understanding, but also a meaningful vocabulary which will greatly aid him when he undertakes work in more specialized fields.

3. A social study program takes into consideration children's interests just as does the activity program. It is very much concerned with habits, attitudes, and skills. However, it does put subject-matter, which for a while has been neglected, back into proper focus. How can one gain an appreciation of the work of the farmer, unless the child knows more about him than what he derives from dressing a farmer doll and constructing in miniature surroundings suitable for him. People get more out of a symphony concert by having some one help them to interpret it. They take something to it and as a result develop a greater appreciation than had they been left entirely to their own vague ideas about the music.
4. In a social study program the teacher's mature judgment is more of a guide than in most activity programs. There is not the tendency to let the immature judgment of the six or seven year old determine what is best and vital for the children of a given group.
5. A social study program requires carefully planned discussion periods, quantities of illustrative material and first hand experiences when possible, otherwise a variety of vicarious experiences which help to answer children's questions and to develop the necessary background for the manual side of the work. The tendency in the discussion period where a pure activity program is the vogue seems to be to stress the accomplishment on the manual side, and minimize the value of new ideas and interpretations.

There are many school systems that include a carefully planned social study program for the lower grades as part of the curriculum. Others make claim for such programs in connection with holidays. Occasional, intermittent work along the line,

does not lend itself to steady consistent growth in social meaning as does that gained through rich experiences throughout the year.

This raises the question of the type of organization for the lower grades which lends itself best to continuous growth on the part of the child. There are those who advocate the working out of certain definite major units in each grade with a choice of secondary units from which the teacher may select. Others are in favor of the recurring interest type of organization which would permit the study of the farm as a topic at several grade levels, if the children are interested.

Advocates of the more organized scheme contend that because children's interests, as they are manifest through their dramatic play, are centered around the problems of home community, transportation, et cetera, they are justified in placing at different grade levels certain social study units which will insure steady growth in ideas and understanding about those forces which touch the child's life and which he can be helped to interpret. This organization has the advantage of avoiding duplication of units in several grades, until children are bored and

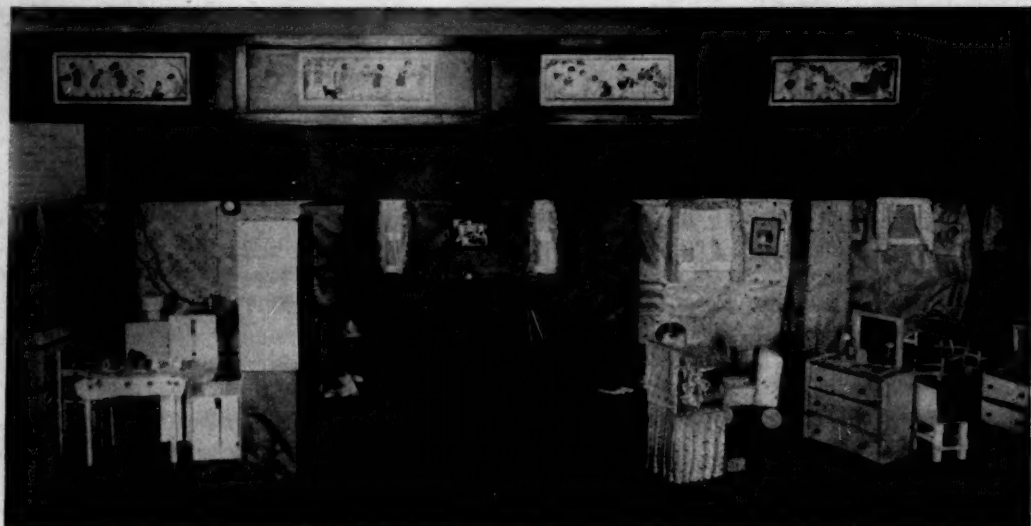
go home and exclaim: "We have to study about aeroplanes again!" This situation is particularly bad where the turnover in a system is heavy and a child is in danger of going to a new building and meeting an enterprise in which he has engaged the year before.

It also helps to avoid not only duplication in different schools, but also the tendency of one teacher to imitate the work of another without considering whether the content of the unit is too advanced for her group, or too immature. There has been too much duplication at different grade levels without growth in ideas or in manual skill. It is not uncommon to find the actual content side of a unit in transportation in a kindergarten richer than when the same subject is studied in the second grade. This criticism works both ways—sometimes the kindergartner goes too far, but the primary teacher too often is satisfied with thin superficial work in ideas.

For example, a child in a second grade who had been studying trains, was questioned by a visitor as to what freight trains carry. "Supplies," was the answer. The same question was put to another child in the group. "Supplies," was the answer. The



A problem of importance is that of placement of such studies as Indian life, life in Japan and in other lands.



A group of kindergarten children may be interested in building a house and dramatising home activities. The same interest in a first grade might be quick to develop into a study of the food supply. Second and third graders might have the same interest, but it could be enlarged into some study of house furnishings or building materials.

visitor pressed her questioning farther and ventured, "What kind of supplies?" There was no response, except the word, "supplies." Finally one child ventured to suggest *oranges*. So he was asked where oranges came from and he replied, "the farm." Another child contributed "California." This is an example of superficial work, where the term *supplies* had been used loosely in connection with the freight train, but it meant nothing definite to the children.

According to a recurring interest plan, it is possible to have the same interest in two or three grades in a building at the same time. One summer in our Observation School, an interest in transportation took the primary grades by storm. In many situations first and second grade teachers would have felt that it would have been a better third grade social study unit and disregarded the interest of the first and second graders. Instead, what happened was that the first grade teacher guided an interest in trains, a second grade teacher, one on boats. Still a third kept pace with a rapidly increasing interest in various forms

of air craft. Each teacher helped her group at its own level to develop an understanding of one aspect of transportation, by means of excursions, discussions, drawing, and manual arts.

Another example of recurring interest is the one which has to do with home life. This interest is considered by many a suitable one for development with children of the kindergarten or any of the first three grades. When it appears at different levels it should be utilized to the best advantage, according to this plan of organization, and any background which the children already have should be made the starting point for new concepts. For example, a group of kindergarten children may be interested in building a house and dramatizing home activities. The same interest in a first grade might be quick to develop into a study of the food supply, or health. Second and third graders might have the same interest, but it could be enlarged into some study of house furnishings, building materials, or home life in other lands, pioneer life. The central idea is centered around some aspect of home life.

Another problem of importance is that of the placement of studies such as Indian life, life in Japan and other lands. At present there seems to be a tendency to place the work not lower than the third grade, because it is felt that the possibilities of utilizing the child's immediate environment furnishes sufficient content for the first two grades.

Dr. Rugg in his *Child-Centered School* sounds a word of warning about limiting the child's horizon. He says: "... new schools as well as old cling unduly long to the study of the local and ignore important concepts which may begin as early as the first grade." Those who are in accord with Rugg would agree as to the intelligence of a certain first grade teacher whose six-year-olds requested to take a trip to Japan on the new ship which they had constructed. Instead of thwarting this suggestion, she promptly got from the children a list of suggestions of things they would like to observe in Japan. The children were encouraged to bring in pictures, dolls, fans, and articles characteristic of this people. A lesson or two was devoted to looking at them and the things of most interest to the children were briefly discussed. This teacher took the opportunity. An intensive study such as might be carried on in a third grade was far beyond the children, but this first grade teacher merely began to acquaint her group with people who live differently and dress differently from ourselves. As she was a person with background, she could answer accurately and intelligently the many questions that were raised by first graders.

Relating social studies to other branches of the school program seems to be a problem for many primary teachers. There are many who feel that without a program of social science the primary grades lack body because of a dearth of content material. Social study units offer rich opportunities for making reading, language, number,

science and fine and manual arts function in situations real to the child. Every opportunity to correlate these with a unit of work should be utilized. To be sure not every aspect of the tool subjects should be taught in connection with the social study units. Too often one finds teachers using the unit for practicing a tool subject beyond the place where it fits in naturally. This makes for artificiality and there is danger of loss of interest on the part of the children.

Let us consider one last problem; namely, too much of the social study work and activity work of all kinds, has degenerated into material for show purposes rather than for developing children. Some teachers feel that they gain in prestige and are rated high if the principal can say, "Miss — has a lovely unit in her room." No doubt she has, but the elaborateness of the manual work tells only a very small part of the story. Again it is not uncommon to find that units must be hurried and finished in order that some distinguished guests who are soon to visit may see them, or the parents are coming and must see the final product. It is not fair to let ourselves, or our children, be hoodwinked by any pressure, to erect an airport for the planes or to convert an oatmeal box into a silo, etc., unless we can give sufficient time to prepare the children in background material for the making of the manual aspects necessary for a finished product. Let the visitors find the children where they really should be and doing their work right. An intelligent visitor can usually see at a glance where work has been done without a sound basis.

The manual side of the unit on the farm, or the unusually fine airplane is quickly and easily scrapped, but the understandings that the children have gained about the significance of these in their daily lives, should be more lasting—even though they may need modification as society and times change—as they are doing very rapidly at present.

Some Whys and Hows of the Activity Program

JULIA LETHELD HAHN

Supervising Principal, 3rd Division, Public Schools, Washington, D.C.

CONSIDER first what the modern school means by some of its educational terminology, for perhaps some of the inconsistencies between theory and practice (and there are many) are due to the fact that we use educational terms without thinking them through into practice. Take, for example, the "development of the whole child"—a slogan of the Activity School. What do we mean by this? Hasn't the whole child always been at school? Yes, physically present and at the same time often mentally absent. What he was thinking when apparently giving rapt attention to the teacher and the work at hand was often not what we so fondly imagined. What a strange inconsistency that this condition existed in the school at a time when it was concerning itself so largely with mental development that it often neglected other important phases of growth!

When we really accept the responsibility for the education of the "whole child," however, we are bound to take the view that facts and skills obtained under pressure and accompanied by undesirable attitudes are detrimental rather than constructively educative. We are, then, as anxious to avoid emotional stresses and strains for children and to build emotional poise and a sense of well being in them as we are to teach them any number of facts. The high tension of modern life demands a school in which there are not only many avenues of expression but calm and peace and the impersonal guidance of a teacher who is emotionally well balanced herself.

In the development of the whole child we are interested in building sound bodies as well as sound minds. Practicing healthy living in the school has taken the place of fairy health castles and posters showing the virtuous milk bottle pursuing the wicked coffee pot. The necessity for freedom of

movement is recognized as of prime importance in the school that not only provides movable furniture but opportunities to move it. Instead of planting children so far apart that they cannot cough in each others' faces the modern school endeavors to teach them to cover their mouths when coughing and to stay away from others when they have a cold.

Again the school realizes that if the child is to become increasingly better able to care for himself he must be made sensitive to proper health conditions as far as possible—sensitive to proper lighting—for example—so he will move when the sun shines on his table and will shift his chair to secure better light on his reading book. For even when we take the greatest care to provide proper lighting—occasions are bound to arise in a moving, social school situation which are not ideal in all respects at once. The child must learn to assume responsibility for caring for himself both in school and out. No one is going to follow him through life and adjust the furniture and shades for him. He must learn to do that for himself. In many other ways, also, the modern Activity School provides opportunities for the practice of right health habits and for the development of right attitudes toward healthy living.

Another aspect of the development of the whole child is the social one. Instead of making selfish individualists of children the school tries to make tolerant, coöperative, understanding workers of them. It conceives social development to mean the reaching out of experience into the wider life of the community and of the world at large as well as social adjustments within the school. But it realizes also that tolerant understanding grows day by day in social surroundings and does not necessarily result from a mere accumulation of facts about society. A combination of dull facts

from history, geography and science is no more conducive to tolerant understanding nor to active learning than the dulllest routine within any of these subjects. The modern school program must, then, be built largely upon experiencing—first hand if possible, and if this is not possible, then as true to reality as we can make it.

In our discussion of the whole child up to this time we have touched briefly upon the emotional, physical, and social aspects of development leaving the mental until last, not because it is less important but because these other phases have received less emphasis than they deserved until very recent years. The fact remains, however, that the teacher is not relieved of the task of securing mental growth in every child simply because she is trying to base her work more largely upon children's interests and needs. On the contrary, she needs to keep herself exceedingly sensitive to leads to subject matter and exceedingly skilful in teaching all of it.

She must plan possibilities in order to supplement the planning of the children. She must see to it that children recognize the need for good hard work in order to further their plans. Drill or practice is as necessary as it ever was but is more often tied up with larger group activities. Practice then becomes necessary in order to further the plans of the individual and the group.

An example from classroom practice may serve to illustrate a contrast in the sensitivity of two teachers of the same grade to leads to practice of needed skills. The children in one first grade classroom in which a playhouse was under construction were planning their morning's work. Someone suggested the making of a grandfather's clock. The teacher accepted the situation and appointed a committee of three to make the face of the clock. The three were chosen because they "could make good figures."

In another first grade classroom the children were also building a playhouse. One boy had made a wooden telephone and the children decided that a telephone book

should be made. "But you know we cannot make good figures," the teacher said. "And all of us cannot write our names and addresses." At once each child undertook to practice in the light of his needs. Later one ambitious member of the group insisted upon a classified advertisement section in the back of the book. This seemed to the teacher to require greater technique than the group could reasonably be expected to acquire at this time so she suggested that it might be desirable to invite the second and third grade children to write this part and that their contributions could then be pasted into the back of the phone book.

The first teacher was most interested in getting the playhouse made as quickly and as well as possible. The second, however, was sensitive to a larger number of educational possibilities in the situation.

The business of school, then, is to keep total learnings of high quality. It must concern itself with children's ways of talking, planning, listening, caring for belongings, accepting responsibility, etc., at the same time that it is helping them acquire knowledge and skill along academic lines. For they must learn to do in better ways all of the things they are going to do in some fashion anyhow.

The formation of right habits is very important—but is not the whole story. There is always some situation arising for which we have no ready made habit. Habit formation does not take care of the creative side.

There is a different conception of the creating in the modern school also. Creating has become distinguished from "invention." "Invention" signifies a unique contribution something never yet done. Creating, however, has come to have a broader meaning. Instead of believing that only a few people can create and that the majority must be content always to follow, the modern school not only provides opportunities for every child to create but definitely stimulates and nurtures every child's creative ability. Dr. John Dewey takes this position when he assumes that the value of the discovery does not depend upon the fact that no one thought of it before, for if sincere

and straightforward it is original in quality even if others have already made the discovery.

This is a much more hopeful outlook, then, for every child. We cannot hope to bring all children to the same high level but we believe that all children can make a contribution that will release whatever creative ability they may have and will increase their self respect and keep them growing in as many directions as possible. The school, then, not only permits creating but stimulates and encourages it. Unfortunately, creativity has frequently been limited to certain kinds of work, for example, to art, music, literature or work with materials. But if the school accepts the broader conception of creating it looks for creativity in every phase of school work. A lesson observed in a sixth grade not long ago will serve as an illustration. The children were on tiptoe discovering new relationships in measurement and experimenting with them. To my mind they were doing creative work as surely as though they had been making discoveries with wood, paint or clay. Arithmetic, spelling and reading can certainly be creative to some extent. The modern school likes to think of everything as belonging somewhere on the scale of creativity. The arithmetic period may at one time be high on the scale of creativity while at another it may find a less advanced location. The important thing is that we look for opportunities to make all work more creative.

The question arises of whether it is better to have one large unit of work, many smaller ones, or a combination of both. We have purposely avoided stressing this phase of the problem for we do not consider the type of organization of greatest importance. There has been a tendency to over-emphasize the external machinery of the activity program. The type of organization is not as important as what happens to the children. If the children are doing considerable thinking; are doing as much of the planning as possible; are doing as much creating as possible; are learning as much along as varied lines as they can understand

and use; then the form of organization the work takes need not give us great concern. This form depends so largely upon the educational preparation of the teacher, her sensitivity to changing theories and practices, and the needs of the particular group of children. In the brief attention we have given to different ways of interpreting the activity program we have purposely neglected to describe many of the procedures of the Modern Activity School with which you are familiar, but have tried rather to strike some high points which seem most significant to teachers.

There are many difficulties involved in changing to a more child-directed program. The first difficulty is the teacher's lack of confidence in her own ability to change—the tendency to fall back on old traditional procedures when things do not go just right in the new approach. This tendency is not limited to teachers of any one experience group. The young teacher just out of a modern teachers college sometimes resorts to techniques which may have been used when she started to school and which she knows very well are not desirable. A visitor in the room may disturb her, or her planning may not work out in practice, and in desperation she resorts to anything that seems to tide her over this period of uncertainty. The experienced teacher too, often reverts to traditional practices which she has discarded in theory when she finds herself faced by an unexpected and trying situation. The teacher must have patience with herself, and others must have patience with her. We can expect her to make mistakes and to do some groping.

The teacher's lack of confidence is due also in part to new techniques necessary in educational leadership as opposed to educational dictatorship. The teacher is surer of herself if she does most of the planning and questioning. It is hard for her to feel that learning can take place unless she is doing the pumping. The teacher has to learn to give skilful but definite guidance. When she first tries to bring children more largely into the thinking and planning she is often inclined to permit too much of the

trivial—to accept almost anything that seems more social or anything the children make. She has to determine to her own satisfaction how much directing she should do and what the standards should be. She soon learns to help children organize, to reject the trivial and superficial both in materials and ideas.

Another difficulty in accomplishment of the activity program is that the teacher is often afraid of new materials and techniques. She was educated along different lines herself. Initiative and independent thinking probably were not cultivated to any great extent in her own school experience. She must accept a large part of the responsibility for continuously reeducating herself. She needs to experiment with wood, clay, and sewing materials; she needs to learn to handle tools, needles, etc.; she needs to attack fearlessly the many problems arising in the new approaches to learning. It is comforting to the teacher, however, to learn that she does not need a whole new set of techniques. She still has to teach. If the teacher has always been successful in teaching reading and has kept in touch with new trends and modified her teaching accordingly she need not worry about whether her technique fits into an activity program.

We have all perhaps seen two extreme types of teachers; the teacher who does practically all of the talking, planning and questioning; and the teacher who waits too long for children to suggest things. After all, it doesn't make any difference who suggests the activity. Dr. Dewey says, "There is no ground for believing that the teacher should never suggest anything. The wise teacher is very much more likely than the child to know what his own interests and impulses mean. But the suggestions must fit in with the child's dominating mode of growth." The activity, then, must not only be of interest to children but must be suited to their needs.

Teachers often feel limited because of insufficient time "to get everything in." This is more acute when there is a tendency to isolate an activity period, or creative

period, or work period or whatever it may be called, from the rest of the school work. To put the activity on one side and learnings on the other is to make a false division between knowledge and skills and the experiences from which they grow. Children plan, carry out and judge work periods very well but are not always brought into the planning of the rest of their work. We need to work toward larger participation in total planning.

The teacher first carefully plans possibilities, does considerable research, studies the course of study for the term to see where shifts need to be made, plans much more than she knows will be accomplished. Then and only then is she ready to follow the leads of children if they are valuable. But we need to go further. The course of study should not be just for the teacher. It was really made for the child's growth and there seems to be no good reason for keeping him in the dark concerning it. Why not take the children into the problem? Why should they not know the goals for the term and plan ways of reaching them? Of course, the younger the children are the shorter the span of planning we can reasonably expect.

A difficulty often discussed by teachers is that of the large number of children in the room and the fact that a few do not seem to be interested in a worthwhile activity. There are a number of ways of handling such a situation. One skilful teacher told me not long ago that there were two boys in her room who did not seem to want to do anything when the group was given an opportunity for free choices. The teacher made up her mind that she would wait a while and watch to see what would happen. For two such periods the boys wandered aimlessly about. The other children were busy and paid no attention to them. Finally one of the boys came to the teacher and said, "I want to help Sam with the boat but he doesn't want me." The teacher said, "Well, do you blame him? You haven't been doing anything and when we made our plans you did not seem to want to work. I am sure that

Sam will be glad to have your help if you are ready to work." The other boy, left entirely alone in such a businesslike atmosphere, also got tired of being ignored and chose a piece of work of his own. Of course some children might be satisfied to walk around for the rest of the term—some people are like that. In such a case the teacher would have to step in after a reasonable time with suggestions and even, if necessary, assign a piece of work and see that it was accomplished. It has always been difficult to work with large numbers of children. But the children are here—we have to something with them—and we may as well try to work with nature rather than against it. We probably do need to give greater attention to individual needs as a part of the larger group activity.

The lack of sufficient materials and of places to keep them is a problem with many teachers. Nobody has ever had enough of either but this is not an insurmountable difficulty. Hunting for available materials in the community is valuable for children and teachers as well. Children are very skilful in helping work out ways of keeping their room in good workshop order. Some of the best work is done in the most inconvenient locations where conditions challenge the creative ability of teachers and children.

A lack of unity of effort of all the forces that contribute to the education of the children is felt in some schools. And there are many both in and out of school. It is hard to keep everything working in the light of the same principles. Parent Education, and the Nursery School Movement have done much to help in this respect but much more needs to be done in bringing

home and community more closely into the problem of educating children. Benevolent acquiescence is not enough. Active, understanding cooperation is necessary.

Within the school the problem is as great, for so many different people are reacting upon the children. We are all trying to work in the light of the same principles but sometimes are too busy getting things done to sit down together and think things through, and the result is that all parts of educational procedure do not always fit together. The school needs the help of the expert, the specialist, but the expert also needs to fit into the general philosophy and plans of school. Great progress is being made in securing greater integration of effort but again there is need for more.

Perhaps most serious difficulty is the tendency apparent in some quarters to try to substitute the activity program for good teaching. Unless the teacher knows how to teach reading for example no amount of planning of the group activity or unit of work to include reading will insure sufficient growth in the subject. A poor teacher does not improve her techniques of teaching merely because she throws more responsibility on the children. Children need guidance and real teaching as much as they ever did.

In summary, potent factors in the success of an activity program include, the teacher's willingness to change, acceptance of new materials and techniques, discrimination in the use of the limited school time, supplying of adequate supplies, the limiting of class size, a working toward greater teaching efficiency and the unified effort of all persons concerned with the education of the child.



A man must be able to cut a knot, for everything cannot be untied.

AMIEL

NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

MARY E. LEEPER

EDUCATION WEEK IN SOUTH AFRICA

The following letter has been received at Headquarters:

University of South Africa
Bloemfontein, S. A.

September 13, 1932

DEAR MADAM:

I wish to thank you for the material which you sent me for use in the exhibit on American Education in connection with the Education Week held here, from September 5th to 8th. It was a great success, so great in fact that an attempt is now being made to place all the available material in a permanent Educational Museum.

If at any time you have new material which would be an asset to such an institution I shall be pleased to receive it.

Yours Faithfully,

WILLARD EYBERS.

It is gratifying to know that Education Week is celebrated in South Africa as well as in America and that our Association could share in the celebration through sending our publications.

WORLD FEDERATION BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

The Fifth Biennial Conference of the World Federation of Education Associations will be held in Dublin, Ireland, July 29th-August 4th, 1933. Upon request, special plans will be made for those wishing to visit educational centers before the conference.

Information concerning all conference arrangements may be secured by writing to Mr. T. J. O'Connell, General Secretary, 9 Gardiner's Place, Dublin, Ireland.

NEW CURRICULUM STUDIES

A.C.E. Headquarters recently received copies of two curriculum studies of interest to kindergarten and primary teachers.

One is the October, 1932, *Bulletin of the State Teachers College at Farmville, Virginia*, and is the Training School Course of Study for the kindergarten, first, second and third grades.

The second study is, *Curriculum Bulletin*

No. 9 of the Public Schools of Kansas City, Missouri, and is a course of study for the kindergarten.

It is clearly stated in both studies that a course of study can never be static or complete. Its only purpose can be to guide the teacher's planning and to serve as a guide for further study and progress. With this purpose in mind the material presented in these bulletins is most helpful and stimulating.

INFORM YOUR PUBLIC

No doubt you have read the splendid articles by Dr. Sutton of Atlanta and Dr. Stoddard of the University of Iowa in the November and December issues of the *Journal of the National Education Association* on the value and importance of the kindergarten to the child. You can perform a service to childhood by making it *your* responsibility to see that reprints of these articles are in your local papers. Extra copies of these articles may be secured from Joy Morgan, Editor, 1201-16th St., Washington, D.C.

GOOD FOOD FOR LITTLE MONEY

This title describes a new leaflet on nutrition issued by the American Child Health Association. If you wish a wise and economical guide in the selection of right foods for growing children send for this leaflet. American Child Health Association, 450 Seventh Avenue, New York, N.Y.

1 to 3 copies 3¢ each.

4 to 9 copies 1¢ each.

A.C.E. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETS

On the 28th and 29th of December, while you are enjoying your Christmas vacation, the members of the Executive Board of the A.C.E. will meet in Washington, D.C., for the mid-winter annual meeting. Serious and careful consideration will be given to all the problems of the Association. Particular attention will be given to the formation of plans for the program of the 1933 convention which will be held in Denver, Colorado, June 28-July 1.

BOOK REVIEWS

Editor, ALICE TEMPLE

A non-reading curriculum for first grade.
—Miss Wright's new book¹ is an account of an experiment in Lincoln School of Teachers College, Columbia University, which was carried on in relation to an investigation into "What type of program best fits the six-year-old child?" Although there are schools which feel no pressure to teach reading in first grade, this is the first book that has been written on the subject and delights the heart of the first grade teacher who has had to teach first graders to read regardless of whether or not they were ready for it.

Several pertinent questions are raised by Miss Wright as, "by delaying reading until there was greater maturity and a larger fund of experience to build upon, would reading and writing be learned with greater economy of time and effort?" and "if they did not start early to acquire a mastery of these tools would there be a slowing up of the educative process?" The book does not attempt to answer these questions but it does show how six-year-olds acquired learning which, according to Miss Wright, best met their "actual needs, hungers, and readiness at the stage of growth where they were," with no provision made for teaching reading.

Miss Wright interestingly tells how she lived with her group of twenty-four children in a first grade environment where no provision for teaching of reading and writing was made. Much of the book is in the form of records based on classroom notes and shows how the program developed from day to day. It pictures vividly "the children as they hammered and sawed and built, painted and modeled, experimented with science and cooking material, created rhythms and song, play and story and verse, and as they went investigating, and then as they carried on their discussion and their reorganization of information gained. It follows them on their excursions to docks, boats, bridges, railroad station, and trains, airports, markets and stores, to parks and museums, gathering knowledge about how a community carries on its work." Many excel-

lent points in guidance of children's activities, often overlooked in some schools, are brought out, as for example "not allowing a child to miss opportunities of experimenting with building or construction merely because his greatest interest lies in painting and modeling; and the value of discussion for giving direction and impetus to the program to be followed during the day and succeeding days."

The educative values of the experiences came as a result of children's interests guided and directed by adults and by contacts children made with each other in an enriched curriculum of work. The plan of not teaching reading, according to Miss Wright, eliminated the danger of stress and strain experienced by a few children when taught to recognize letters and words and which is thought by some to be permanently injurious to the nervous system and eyesight. The plan followed by Miss Wright paved the way for reading through giving the child a prolonged reading readiness period in which to build up meanings and concepts which we all know are more essential for the child to take to books than merely an ability to recognize words.

The sub-title of the book, "A non-reading curriculum," is unfortunate for it leads one to divorce all thought of reading from the program of first grade. Miss Wright makes a great appeal for reading readiness, an appeal which every first grade teacher urgently wishes made. If only Miss Wright had made an appeal for reading readiness as a most important part of the process of learning to read and to include it in the reading program! It is in his readiness for reading that the child takes his first step. Did not the children in Miss Wright's first grade compose records of experiences and see them recorded, learn to recognize their names printed under their coat hooks, associate letter O with Orange juice and M with Milk (for they had to indicate their order each day by writing these letters)? Miss Wright gave them many language opportunities, opportunities to sense word discrimination in literature and composition; to handle many books and to go to the library in search of books related to their experiences. As a result the child memorized

¹ Lulu E. Wright. *A First Grade at Work*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia, 1932. Pp. vii + 247.

their favorite books, especially "The Pony Tree" and "Pelles New Suit," from having heard them frequently read.

Since in nursery schools and kindergartens the curricula are much the same as that described by Miss Wright, the question naturally arises as to whether or not some of the children were ready to read and would have read if provision had been made for reading. Surely it is just as necessary to recognize the mature child ready and wanting to read as to make provision for the "low-readiness" child, providing the procedure used in helping the child learn to read in no way makes for strain or stress on the child physiologically.

Miss Wright reports that since it was administratively impossible to carry on a controlled experiment nothing of definiteness in the way of results can be given. Miss Wright went with her group of children to second grade where reading was based on experiences which the group had had the year before. The records made by the children in first grade were used by them as reading material in second grade. "All but three or four of the children responded to the introduction and study of reading in the second grade with pleasure and a few of them with eagerness."

The book leaves one with questions in regard to the progress of the group which was used for the experiment after leaving first grade. It also leaves the impression of active living in an enriched curriculum as being an educative force far more important and suitable for first grade children than a program which places major emphasis on reading and writing at the expense of the other.

MARJORIE HARDY,
Germantown Friends School,
Philadelphia

Color and style as these affect children's interests in pictures.—Considering the very keen interest which all children display in pictures and the high importance of book illustration, it seems strange that so little has been done in attempting to discover what kind of pictures children like best. Dr. Mellinger¹ has recently completed one of the few carefully controlled experimental studies in this field. Any one who tries to find out what children really like in either literature, music or art representation, faces at once the necessity of

limiting the study to a few salient features and to definite age levels. Out of all the possible aspects of pictures which might have been made the subject of investigation, Dr. Mellinger chose two—interest in color as compared with black and white, and interest in realistic style as compared with conventionalized style.

The set-up of the experiment met the requirements of scientific research. In order to avoid distracting variables as far as possible, and to keep constant certain elements in pictures, large plates especially designed were executed by an artist and these were submitted to 795 children on three grade levels—first, third and fifth. The subjects of the pictures were drawn from nature and child life and each design was painted in various combinations, black and white, two color, three color, in both realistic and conventionalized style. Each of these plates was submitted to every child and the totals of the quantitative results offer some interesting clues to children's preferences within the necessarily limited range of the research. A few of the most significant findings as they relate to these children and these pictures are:

1. Decided preference was shown at the three age levels for pictures in color.
2. In total (but with some divergence in different grades and different subjects) three color was preferred to two color.
3. Decided preference was shown at the three age levels for the realistic style as compared with the conventionalized.

Much remains to be done in trying to discover children's tastes in this field but this investigation points the way, suggests a useful method, and furnishes substantial and reliable data regarding certain aspects of the subject. Interpretation of these data is made easy and clear by the author's lucid and graphic style of presentation.

ANNIE E. MOORE,
Teachers College, Columbia University,
New York City

A new book for teachers of art.—The teaching of Art in our schools has always been one of the favorite members of the "fads and frills" class, tolerated in times of prosperity but now in these days of difficulty challenged as never before. Not only are all its supporters being questioned but they are questioning themselves more seriously and more sincerely, seeking most earnestly to know their purposes that they may effectively present them to others.

¹ Bonnie E. Mellinger, *Children's Interests in Pictures*. New York: Bureau of Publications. Teachers College, Columbia University. 1932. Pp. ix + 52.

Margaret Mathias in her latest book,¹ *The Teaching of Art*, renders an opportune service to all who are concerned with Art Education, by her comprehensive survey of the basic truths upon which art depends, and the clarity of her definitions with their stimulating concrete illustrations.

Her purpose is to meet the needs of students who are preparing to teach art in the primary or elementary grades. A broad interpretation of this means all students who are preparing to teach children, for today art is so widely used in connection with other subjects and general school activities that it is no longer a special subject taught only by a special teacher at a specified hour.

Here is a source to which not only student teachers may go for help but teachers of experience who seek the answer to questions such as, "Why teach Art?"—"What is the value of having children see color?"—for the author deals clearly and briefly with all phases of art education so organized and arranged that there is no difficulty in finding the particular section needed. But teachers and students are not the only ones who are seeking information about teaching art. Here are a few questions that came from a woman's club:

1. What ought the parents of art talented children to do to help?
2. What ought the parent of average children to do to help them to appreciate art?

The Teaching of Art answers both these questions. Miss Mathias while holding consistently to her avowed aim has produced a book that has universal value.

"To understand the art needs of children we must observe children. Observations should not be limited to art lessons." This quotation suggests the broad inclusive cooperative spirit of the book. I know of no other publication that so ably puts art in its place as a subject to be taught as are all other subjects according to principles based upon knowledge and understanding of children that comes through only study and experience. There are no definite "Hows" but the goals and the roads leading to them are clearly indicated, as are the dangers of detours into copy work, patterns, and emphasis upon skill rather than ideas.

The book is rich in content both pictorial

and verbal but its great value lies in the bringing together, in one small, moderately priced book, information and ideals needed by students, teachers, and parents. *The Teaching of Art* is a great step toward the understanding of Art.

AMY RACHEL WHITTIER,
Massachusetts School of Art,
Boston

A unique and ambitious bibliography.—Because there has been a growing demand for a complete list of "units of work, activities, projects, themes, etc. that have been used in the newer curricula," the authors of a recent volume¹ have accomplished the task of cataloging such materials. This catalog includes first, the bibliography of materials; second, the sources and third; the index. The compilers, as one might suspect, have found it impossible to differentiate between the terms used. "How inclusive or exclusive is a unit or an activity? In many schools 'the home' may be called a project. A subdivision called 'food' may be thought of as an activity. Smaller divisions may include 'the grinding of grain,' 'the cooking of cereals,' 'how to eat' etc. In other schools the large, all inclusive theme may be called a unit and any subdivision may be called an activity. Thus 'activities' are included within 'activities' and the terms 'project,' 'theme,' 'activity' etc. are used interchangeably."

Two of the authors of the present volume are now engaged in evaluating the 7000 items in this catalog for the purpose of preparing a selected catalog in which the better activities will be described in detail. The present volume "is presented with the intention of the authors to render some help to students of the elementary school curriculum. They believe that this publication will contribute much toward impressing the educational public with the serious complexity and the extended scope of this new educational development."

Certainly if the educational public has not already been thus impressed, this volume will accomplish its purpose. To the majority of elementary school people, the proposed second volume will doubtless render the larger service.

ALICE TEMPLE

¹ Margaret E. Mathias, *The Teaching of Art*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932. Pp. 12+356. \$3.00.

¹ Alice E. Carey, Paul R. Hanna and J. L. Merriam. *Catalog: Units of Work, Activities, Projects etc. to 1931*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1932. Pp. xii+290.

AMONG THE MAGAZINES

Editor, ELLA RUTH BOYCE

The autumn issues of many educational periodicals carry articles emphasizing a present need—that of establishing the best possible relations between the schools and the public. This theme is treated in many different ways. Practically the entire October issue of *Education* is devoted to it with different people discussing its several phases. John Jay, in charge of Public Relations in Hamtramck, Michigan defines Public Relations as “the school’s bid for the community’s cooperative support of their mutual educational enterprise.” His article deals with the Problem of Editing a House Organ. Other topics are The Principal’s Plans for Public Relations by John S. Thomas of Detroit; The Teacher’s Part in the Public Relations Program by Philip Lovejoy of Chicago who writes from a parent’s viewpoint; The Place of Student Activities in a Public Relations Program by Harry C. McKown of the University of Pittsburgh; Legal and Ethical Aspects of a Public Relations Program by W. W. Carpenter and Bower Aly of the University of Missouri; and The Public School Relations Program by M. A. Kopka of Hamtramck, Michigan.

A significant sentence is here quoted from each of these articles: “A public relations program which is planned on the basis of careful surveys of the school and the community to be a continuous presentation of factual information about the school and its activities will achieve certain very definite and desirable results.”

Again: “I believe that the teacher must literally love to teach. I almost believe she should rather teach than eat, but in general I mean that she will be perfectly willing to sacrifice a meal in order to be of assistance to her pupils or the parents or citizens in general.” And, “Only by justifiable activities, presented in a variety of just as justifiable and worthy ways, will the intelligent support of the community be successfully enlisted.” And, “The public relations program must be developed around children and their needs. The business of the school is service, and the success of the school and of the state depends on the quality of the service rendered.”

School Management in its October issue discusses the same topic, with Carlton K. Matson, editorial writer of the Cleveland Press, answering the question What To Do When the Reporter Comes. He says that school people “frequently get off on the wrong foot” when they come to meet newspaper people. It is inevitable that they shall meet for our public schools are news and will be treated as such by the papers. Just in what spirit this publicity will be presented and whether it will be of benefit or harm to the schools depends, he thinks, on the school people. So he tells us—first to get acquainted with the reporters, to ask their advice, try them out on confidences to see whether they are to be trusted or not, and finally explain to them what education is doing. He makes this interesting comment—“Make education and the work of the schools interesting. The ability to do this is an important test of the school executive. I am certain that a bore should never be at the head of any part of the school system.”

This same magazine prints also a page showing some thirteen different cartoons culled from different papers which it says are a few of the many printed in answer to a letter sent out by its publisher. On August 20th, he wrote to every newspaper cartoonist in the United States. In this letter he called their attention to the fact that the traditional attitude of dislike by children for school no longer exists and asked them to show rather, when they should be picturing, as they always do, the reopening of the schools in September, cartoons, reflecting the actual present conditions. Their response is surely gratifying to the schools and should help to attain the end he sought “to mobilize public sentiment in favor of maintaining schools adequately through this period of depression.” This is something which surely needed doing and this periodical seems to have done it successfully.

Along the same lines, there is to be found in *School Executives Magazine* for October an article on If The Schools Were Closed, by A. M. McCullough, Superintendent of Schools in Wellington, Kansas. The question carries

its own answer, for surely there are none who could view such a prospect with anything but alarm. He finds two tendencies, one toward extremes in expenditure and one a reaction toward earlier times. He believes that a survey of education will show these fundamental principles—"The schools are creating in the pupil economic productive powers over and above what the pupil would otherwise produce; also, economic intelligence; economic self-control; social intelligence and self-control; political intelligence; hygienic intelligence and conduct; and rational standards of enjoyment." With the array of facts which can be mustered to prove these conclusions, he feels sure the American business man will not only be interested to continue them but to develop them further.

In *Mental Hygiene* for October is to be found a discussion by Dr. Samuel W. Hartwell of Worcester, Massachusetts, on Adult Adjustments And Non-Adjustments in Relation to Their Effects Upon Children. This is a reprint of an article read by him before the Parents' Council of Philadelphia in March, 1932. It is of equal value for teachers. He first defines attitudes as "The collection of traits that others see grouped together in us as they interpret our personalities from our behavior." He then explodes the idea that we act as we do because of our intellectual life by showing by a number of illustrations that behavior is really conditioned by emotions, the way we feel about things. He says these emotions have been built up in us by various factors; first, the environment; next our intellectual capacity; bodily health comes next, but the most important factor is made up of the people who were around us. He says we are all searching for happiness and that difficulties arise because we do not always understand our own motives—that many of them lie in the sub-conscious. So, "To try to understand our own personalities, our own feelings, to face them frankly, to admit to ourselves that we have them, to try to understand where they come from and how we might change them, is a very wise thing." He finds in such procedure three good results: first, better mental health, since understanding one's self is the basic principle on mental health; second, the possibility of correcting and avoiding mistakes; third, the fact that an adult, parent or teacher who understands himself becomes a much more vital person to the child. He says that there are four moods which we should face in ourselves and understand,

all of them natural, but positive or negative in our development as we face them frankly. These are first the feeling of discouragement; second, the feeling of fear, guilt, and unworthiness; third, the feeling of confusion, and lastly the feeling of loneliness. As one is able to meet and solve these feelings, and he gives practical illustrations of how this may be done, one becomes a person more fitted to help children to meet and solve these same difficulties.

In the same journal, Dr. R. L. Jenkins of the Institute for Juvenile Research in Chicago has an article on Periodicals for Child-Guidance Clinics. He says since the field of child guidance cuts across so many different fields—"medical, psychiatric, psychological, social, educational"—it is especially difficult to select periodicals for it. Three criteria were chosen to determine the importance of journals in this field:

1. Frequency of reference in the Child Development Abstracts of the National Research Council.
2. Frequency of references in the Bibliography on Mental Hygiene of the National Committee on Mental Hygiene.
3. The combined judgment of the staff for the Institute for Juvenile Research.

On the basis of these criteria, three separate lists were drawn up and a final fourth list compiled from them. This gives a list of 38 periodicals recommended as suitable for a child guidance clinic. These are given in the order of their importance. *Mental Hygiene* leads the list, and other magazines sometimes mentioned in this department are found as follows: *Survey*, seventh; *Journal of Educational Psychology*, fourteenth; *Child Study*, seventeenth; *Parents*, twenty-fifth; *Progressive Education*, thirtieth; *Hygeia*, thirty-third; *School and Society*, thirty-eighth. Many of the others are highly technical. We will be especially interested in the fact that *Childhood Education* is twenty-eighth, and that the article carries the comment that in common with the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, which is fourth, it would undoubtedly be higher but for the handicap of its newness.

The Elementary School Journal for October contains an article by Paul E. Pierce of Chicago on Administrative Aspects of Testing First-Grade Reading. It describes the construction and use of a first-grade reading test designed for practical administrative purposes in a large

elementary school. He begins with an expression of his belief that the principal should be as concerned with progress in the first grade as in the sixth, though this is not commonly the case. Standardized tests are often unsuitable for administrative purposes for several reasons. It may be that they "fail to measure the objectives of local courses of study; the administration and the marking of such tests often involve considerable detail; they usually measure a limited phase of a given subject; they are often not available because of time or expense connected with requisitions; they are often designed for measurement at the close of the year and consequently unsuited for use at other times." He feels that the devising of tests may be used by a principal as a means of professional training of his staff. He describes how this was done in his school, keeping in mind the facts that it was a school with many handicaps "caused by the use of foreign languages in the homes, social background, and low mental ages." Each first-grade teacher was asked to submit a list of 50 words which she thought the pupils ought to be able to recognize at the completion of the grade. These were tabulated and compared with the Gates vocabulary list, and it was found that 92 per cent of them were among the first 500 of the Gates list, so the composite list was used in the formulation of the test. Simple reading selections were then made based on this list and other first-grade material. The principal administered the test individually to all the pupils in accordance with a plan of flash cards worked out in conference. The same procedure is described as used for Grade 1A. Some interesting facts developed—as for example this "words having a concrete meaning for the child, even though they are long words, as in the case of 'children,' 'chicken,' 'garden,' or 'father' were rarely miscalled." Finally in conclusion he says, that this work "Clearly revealed the influence of deficient language and social backgrounds on first grade reading progress and focused attention on the need of measures to make materials concrete and meaningful to the pupils. The giving of the tests by the principal greatly stimulated the teachers toward the attainment of definite, economical goals in reading instruction. Thus, adequate testing in first grade reading may be regarded as essential to the effective administration of an elementary school. If the prin-

cipal incorporates the mature experience of his staff with the findings of research a program of testing may be effected which results in professional training for the teachers and administrative measures of permanent benefit to the school."

The Journal of The National Education Association has, in its November number an article by Willis A. Sutton, Superintendent of Schools in Atlanta, Georgia, an article entitled "A Superintendent Looks at the Kindergarten." Of the progress which he notes in a given kindergarten from September to May, he says, "Many factors have combined to bring about this change and perhaps that of greatest importance is social adjustment." He comments on many of the values which the kindergarten feels it does contribute, such as enrichment of experience, habits of self-direction and self-helpfulness, cooperation with the home, and adds this significant information: "The school and the community in general profit from the kindergarten, not only from an increased cooperation on the part of the children in obedience to civic laws and interests, but in actual monetary savings." It was found, for example, in his city that in one school the percentage of nonpromotions of children in the first grade with kindergarten training was 9.1 compared to 53.3 of pupils without kindergarten training. He adds, "There has been a gradual decrease of first-grade failures in Atlanta since the kindergartens have become part of the public school system."

School Life for October prints some statistics on kindergartens, comparing the different states, from information furnished by Mary Dabney Davis of the Office of Education. She tells us that practically all public school kindergartens are in cities and that a third of the four and five year old children living in cities of 2500 population or over are in kindergartens. The graph which is printed with the article, shows that Nebraska leads with 80 per cent of its city children in kindergarten, South Carolina is last with but .4 per cent. Alabama and Idaho report no kindergarten enrollments and from eight other states the data is incomplete. It is interesting to note that California, which used to lead the country is now fourth—and it is to be hoped that this change has been brought about by the rising of other states not by the sinking of California.

RESEARCH ABSTRACTS

Editor, ELIZABETH MOORE MANWELL

Shall We Teach Manuscript or Cursive Writing? Since 1921 several private schools in Boston and New York City have been following the plan, originated in England, of teaching manuscript writing instead of the traditional cursive writing. In 1923 it was introduced in the Horace Munn School of Columbia University, Teachers College. Since then numerous other schools have adopted the plan until, in 1930, more than one hundred public and private schools in this country had adopted manuscript writing either in all their grade teaching or for limited groups, especially for the primary grades.

Is this a good thing or not? Does it lead to clearer or more rapid writing? Does it aid in the acquisition of reading ability? Is it more especially suited for the teaching of children of certain ages? These questions have dominated the investigation which has recently been published by Dr. Thelma Voorhis in her monograph, *The Relative Merits of Cursive and Manuscript Writing*.¹

In the first chapters of this study Dr. Voorhis presents a survey of current practice with respect to the teaching of manuscript writing, and gives a résumé of the conclusions of experimental investigations and expert opinion in this field.

A report is also included of the author's own experiment in evaluating the two methods. The children studied were the members of six first grade classes in a public school in Brooklyn, New York. These children were reclassified into six fairly equivalent groups with respect to age, intelligence, reading status, and attendance or non-attendance in kindergarten. Of these six groups three were taught cursive writing for fifteen minutes daily, as part of their regular school routine, following the New York City Public School Course of Study and Syllabus for Elementary Grades. The other three classes followed the same course of study but used the manuscript letter forms, following the Stone-Smalley manuals. All used large primary pencils. During the same year all the

children were receiving identical instruction in reading and all other subjects except handwriting. The basal test in reading was *The Progressive Road to Reading* series. Tests were given in January, April, and June to find out the reading status of the groups at these intervals, and to establish learning curves. These tests included the Detroit Word Recognition Test, Form A, and the Gates Primary Reading Tests for Word Recognition, Word, Phrase and Sentence Meaning, and for Reading of Directions. The results of her study were summarized to meet the following specific questions:

1. Do average first grade children learn to read more or less readily when taught handwriting by the manuscript rather than by the cursive method? Her answer is that without regard to kindergarten training, sex, or general mental level, manuscript has a decided superiority over cursive writing in its influence on beginning reading.
2. What evidence is there in these results to support or refute the belief that girls learn to read more readily than do boys at this level? Her answer is that there was almost no difference between the scores of the boys and those of the girls.
3. Does the factor of attendance or non-attendance at kindergarten affect the reading progress of either or both experimental groups? Dr. Voorhis' results indicated that the children with kindergarten training scored approximately one half word higher, on the average, in the June survey than did the non-kindergarten children. "The difference between the kindergarten and non-kindergarten groups was very slight when compared with the difference between the cursive and manuscript groups. Thus it appears that for these children attendance in kindergarten has much less influence on reading than has the choice of form of handwriting."
4. Is the final difference in reading status in the two experimental groups due to differences in method of teaching handwriting or can it be attributed to teacher

¹ Voorhis, Thelma G. *The Relative Merits of Cursive and Manuscript Writing*. New York City: Columbia University Teachers College, Bureau of Publications for the Lincoln School of Teachers College, 1931. Pp. 68.

personality? The answer to this is that when one cursive and one manuscript teacher of approximately equal training and experience exchanged classes at mid-year, no cursive group reached or exceeded the mean score of any manuscript group.

5. Do bright or dull children reflect the greater influence of handwriting method on beginning reading? The study indicated when the children's scores were classified on the basis of the intelligence levels of the children manuscript writing was distinctly superior to cursive writing in its effects upon reading for each of the five mental level groups thus studied.

In the last chapter of the monograph the author summarizes the results of many different investigations on the relative merits of manuscript and cursive writing, as well as the opinions of certain physicians as to the amount of eyestrain involved by each of the two kinds of writing. The attitudes of several business men were also elicited. These general conclusions are:

1. Manuscript writing is found to be significantly more legible than cursive writing.
2. Manuscript writing is easier for children to learn.
3. Manuscript writing is more rhythmical to write.
4. Manuscript writing is more pleasing to read.
5. The neatness and legibility of manuscript writing tend to carry over to other written work.
6. For certain groups, manuscript writing appears to be as rapid as cursive, different investigators reporting conflicting results.
7. Use of manuscript writing reduces physical strain and eyestrain.
8. Manuscript writing facilitates learning to read and spell.
9. Manuscript writing is as individualistic as cursive writing.
10. The simple letter forms used in manuscript writing constitute an excellent basis for cursive writing, if such a transition is desired.
11. Manuscript writing is favored by all individuals for writing legends, poems, names and so forth.
12. Business men of both England and

America are showing an increasing interest in the use of manuscript writing.

How Do Young Children Differ in their Art Ability? A study³ is reported from the University of Cincinnati School of Household Administration entitled "*A Study of the Art Ability Found in Very Young Children.*"

The children in this study were in attendance in five grades, from the nursery school through the third grade. These grades were chosen from schools where the children had never been given any formal art instruction. Thirty-three children were in nursery school, twenty in kindergarten, fifty-one in first grade, twelve in second grade and nine in the third grade.

For five weeks the author visited each class once a week. On these visits the procedure was informal and the children gathered around to watch; there was no effort made to keep them interested. The programs were as follows:

1. The first week the children were asked to suggest the things they would like to have painted, and these were then sketched for them.
2. The next week the writer painted a portrait of two of the kindergarten children in colonial costume.
3. An exhibition of original but unframed paintings was shown the children the following week.
4. The fourth week the beauty of flowers and flower arrangement was explained and demonstrated and a painting of flowers was made before the class.
5. The last week the beauty of conventional commonplace life was portrayed, such as a nicely kept yard and house, boy mowing lawn, clothes on the line blowing in the wind, and so forth.

The aim of this period of stimulation was to encourage in the children a natural desire for self-expression which would show their ability and appreciation. They were allowed to draw freely whenever they felt inclined during the days which followed. The drawings made were saved and the results analyzed.

It was found that in so far as number of drawings made was concerned the older the child the more prolific he was. There was also great divergence in each age, for example in

³ Knauber, Alma Jordan. "A Study of the Art Ability Found in Very Young Children." *Child Development*. Vol. II, March, 1931. Pp. 66-71.

one grade some children made no drawings and one made as many as thirty-three during the five weeks of the study.

There was great variation in type of drawing, there being a total of 148 different drawings.

These drawings were then rated with regard to their quality. It was estimated that one out of each 13 children appeared to have at least a little artistic talent. While in general it was found that the drawings of the older children rated higher "it may be that the more inarticulate drawings at the early ages with imaginary titles assigned to them are more predictive of later creative ability than those more representative drawings that receive a higher score." There was found to be great difference even among the two year old children as to their interest and ability to draw.

The author also found that the nursery children were eager to draw all things which were new and interesting without regard for pattern. By the time the children had reached

kindergarten, at about the age of five years, however, there was a definite limiting of the range of subject matter. "Somewhere in the growth between three and five years of age children apparently discover 'reality' and realize that sheer imagination will not compensate for poor technique. The First Grade child has apparently achieved more confidence in his ability to represent things. He also has learned patterns from other members of his class or from instruction." In the second and third grade the choice of subject matter became more conventional, with none of the highly imaginative elements of the younger child.

The stimulation offered by the weekly visits of the author was found to be very successful in creating interests and in developing the children's talent along natural lines. "It is suggested . . . that proper stimulation toward creative activity would produce more and better artists and also a people versed in the appreciation of beauty."

In the February Issue of Childhood Education

The Future of Teacher Training as Based on Social Needs by Ruth Streitz, Professor of Education, University of Cincinnati.

A Nation's Strength by Florence E. Bamberger, Professor of Education, Johns Hopkins University.

The Activity Curriculum by Bianca Esch, Director Kindergarten-Primary Education, Louisville Normal School.

School Environment for the Four Year Old Child. Jane Bernhardt and Margaret Dawson of the Staff of University of California at Los Angeles.

These four articles rightly belong in this issue of Childhood Education. They offer new ideas related to The New School, and carry on into the February Journal basic and practical ideas for those concerned with the preparation of teachers for the new school, for those working in a supervisory capacity, and for the classroom teacher.

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